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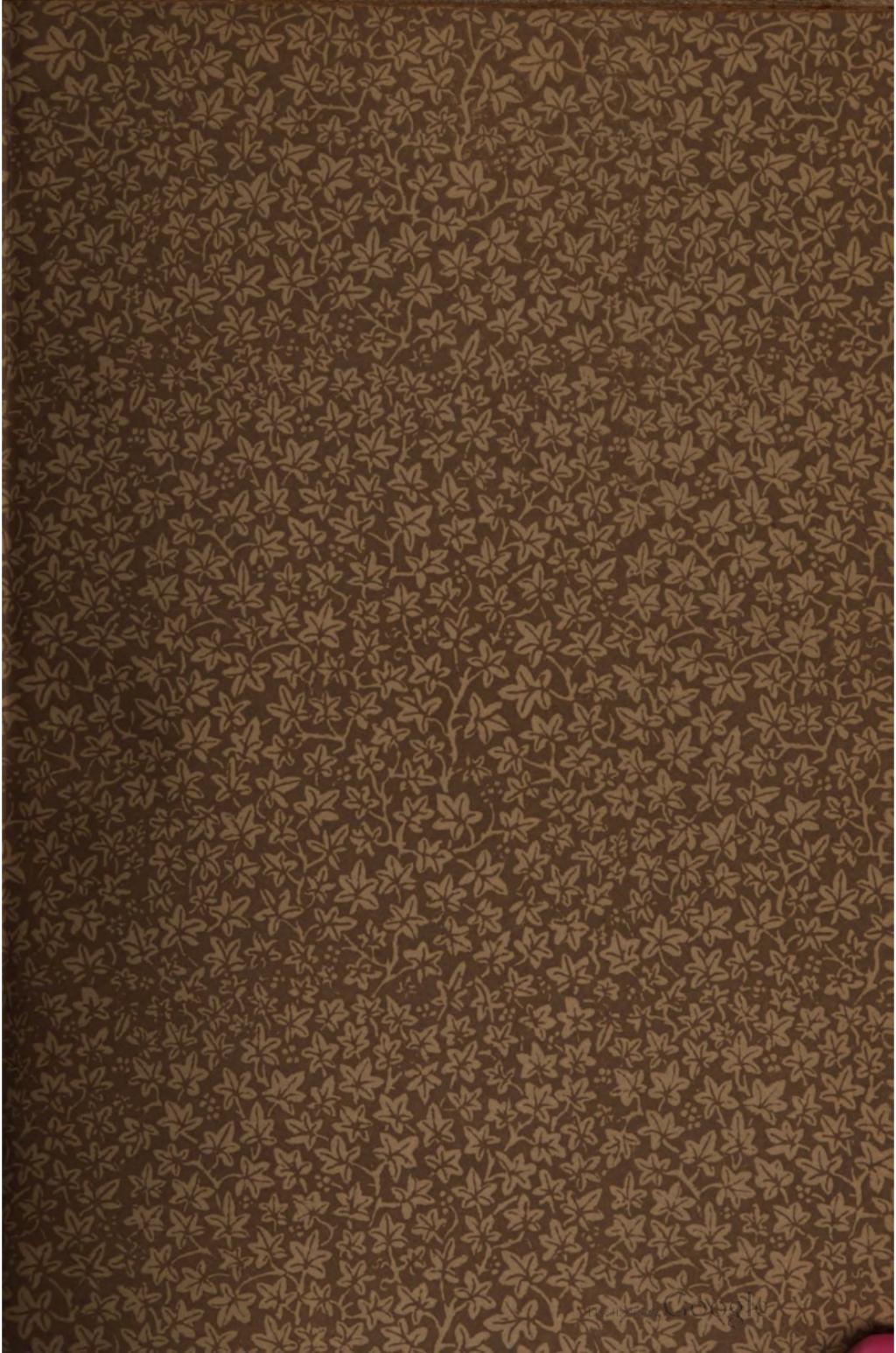
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A YEAR OF LIFE. *







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A YEAR OF LIFE,
THE PRICE OF THE BISHOP,
AND
OTHER POEMS.

A YEAR OF LIFE,

THE PRICE OF THE BISHOP,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JOHN CAMERON GRANT.

(AUTHOR OF "SONGS FROM THE SUNNY SOUTH," ETC.)

LONDON :

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1883.

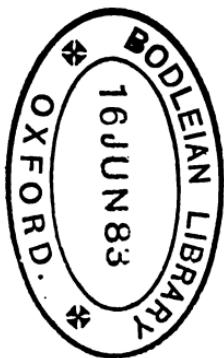
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This Volume

*In slight token of affection and respect
to*

Mr. and Mrs. G. M.

WHEN sweet weeks swiftly passed with dearest Friends
Cease sudden, as a happy dream they pass,
But not as goes a shadow from a glass,
For, heart-engraved, their memory ever sends
Its stretching arms across the gulf that tends
Twixt all sweet things and life ; not so the mass
Of swarming sorrows, all of kin or class
To bitterness with its existence ends ;
Life's common-place we approve or disapprove,
Its trials meet us, but in strife and stress
Leave scarce a healed forgotten scar to move
One thought ; but there is no forgetfulness
For those loved only as a Boy can love,
For all the happy days and dreams of Gress !

GRESS LODGE, STORNOWAY, N.B.

October, 1881.

P R E F A C E .

THE design of "A Year of Life" is a Poem containing three hundred and sixty-five verses, or one for each day. It is in four divisions of ninety stanzas, or thereabouts, corresponding with the four respective months of each quarter of the year, and these, as typified in the various seasons, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, are taken severally to represent—Beginnings,—Boyhood,—Manhood,—Age.

This may appear artificial, but it seems to me always better to write in accordance with some fixed plan rather than at random.

The stanza I have chosen is *the* Sonnet. I say *the* Sonnet advisedly, for verses often appear, set forth as Sonnets, which are as much so in reality as they are Homeric Poems. I admit that there are Sonnets *and* Sonnets, but I think no modern Poet ought to write otherwise than by the strictest Miltonic rule. Moreover, it is such a very beautiful, flowing, and plastic verse, that one should, I

think, scorn to require more than four rhymes in the fourteen lines. In a language so wonderfully flexible and adaptive as English,—so splendid in its very wealth and wilderness of rhymes and measures wherefrom to choose, it seems almost stretching a licence too far, to allow men to sin and stray slipshod over the garden beds, through which only those should be allowed to wander who stride along strongly and freely, but never slip from the paths so well defined by the long use of others. I do not wish from these words to appear conceited, or over proud of my work, such as it may be, or to cry buyers to my wares, but am conscious that if I write otherwise than quite naturally and just as I feel, I will fall into that worse fault, the Devil's darling sin, "the Pride that apes Humility." A true Poet takes his Readers to his very heart: be not hard upon him, you that read, if you cannot take all men freely into your own! All artificial metres should be written upon the strictest model. There is no reason why a person should be compelled to use these metres, but, if they are used, I think we have a right to demand that they be written according to best approved and ancient usage; and that each writer be not a law to himself. If transgression be done, let it be trespass into the domains of the more difficult, and not a slothful sinking back into the realms of sluggish ease.

To my mind our greatest master of the Sonnet was John Milton, and to him I turn for information. Of the eighteen Sonnets he has left us, the seven finest, or nearly one half, are written after the manner for which I contend. Nearest in sway of the Sonnet to the great blind Poet comes, I think, indisputably, John Keats.—About a third of his are written on the strictest plan ; and, if he had lived, I feel convinced, he would have given up the lower and looser method of writing.

If one take at random all the great Sonnets in our language, and read them thro without noticing exactly the measure and the number of rhymes, he will be surprised to find that four-fifths of those he may select for their poetry and beauty, words with certain limitations synonymous, will be those most strictly written. The more perfect the poetic struggle to produce, the more perfect, in form at least, will be the thing produced.

Poetry, moreover, has its twilights holier than any noon-day strength of shape or creation, and tending to issues more momentous. Beauty of form, beauty of phrase, beauty of figure, of colour and of contour, are only truly fair as they minister, each in her place, to that higher and more hidden beauty “ that blends transcends them all.”

The loftier and purer beauty of *Intention* is, and has been, ignored by a certain arrogant School of modern Verse. In it we find none of the high hope of Youth,

and its love and trust in all pure things. It is full of a wild unrest, not that indeed of frenzy or despair, but that of self-accusation, and a consciousness of fall, and failure, and disgust in Life: the Quails of the desert have surfeited and filled to utter sickness the selfish wanderers, who have tasted of all flesh and have now no new thing to ask.—

Of the remaining portion of the Volume it is not necessary to say much. "The Price of the Bishop" came to me, I know not how. It was written one Winter's morning in the North, and I knee-deep in snow out among the Deer and Rabbits, Heaven only knows at what prompting. I have never anywhere read a story like it, never been on the Continent of Europe, or seen a place like the Town described, nor yet with any searching since, and exercise of memory, have I been able to discover whence in the remotest way I could have received a suggestion for the Tale. I am not a Spiritualist, in the accepted and vulgar sense of the word, but I cannot help at times having queer thoughts upon the subject of the connection between Soul and Flesh.

Ill health must account for many shortcomings, of which I am painfully conscious, perhaps increased by the absolute reliance I have been compelled to place upon my own judgment with regard to elision, omission, and alteration in my work.

I tender my hearty thanks for kindly and encouraging criticism passed on my previous Volume, and am by no means above taking any hints from those, far older than myself, who have commission to speak with authority in the world of Letters.—

LONDON,
18th April, 1882.

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“A YEAR OF LIFE.”

THE following is a slight sketch of the plan in the opening stanzas of my Poem. The stream upon whose banks I stand and write has a twofold meaning, symbolizing at once the flood of Time and the river of Life. Some strange warm Sun thaws the frozen waters and ourselves into being and consciousness from the Past. Like the river, we rush away from our young years ; like it, we both form and are as frequently formed by our surroundings ; like it, we reach the larger ocean, only to sigh back ever on our morning shores. All things seem so full of Fate, so vast, so unchangeable, that we are inclined to the belief that Fate is everything, when the distant roaring of a Fall *grows* upon our ear. There is no *development* in Fate,—we are certain of that,—and so it comes that the mind seeks something else.

In XI. and the few following stanzas various attempts to grasp that “something” are briefly glanced at and rejected ; all, as far as I can see, appearing empty and puerile when faced with the fearful facts of existence. We are torn and tossed about of various beliefs and misbeliefs, till in the Eternal nature of things we begin to see hope. The “Beacon Moment” shines out upon us and we take heart : the Magnets are two that attract us, Spirit as well as Flesh, the Future as well as the Present, and tho at times almost compelled to cry, “*Been* and *will be* is all we dare to know,” yet somehow we are so organized that we cannot shut out the feeling that “The thought of us is older than the sea.” From XXVIII. I try to picture a Creation, a Rising, an Origin—call it what one will—under the cold stony clay-blue eyes of the past Saurians and vast Creatures of the early swarming seas, keeping, too, before me “The still-eyed faces of our silent Dead.” Starting from the fiery Star-dust, the Cooling Nebulæ, the Chaotic Elements hidden by the darkness that was upon the face of the Deep, I strive to imagine, on the lifting of the misty curtain, the warm still steamy seas, the fitful rise of flame from

their broad bosom, the bursting forth from their breast of the old organic rocks and their Titanic mountain ridges, followed on by each successive course of several and independent creation. Throughout is seen "The impress of some mighty Hand," but the very vastness of the design, and the necessary omnipotent universality of the sweep and stretch of His Presence thro the distant worlds and spheres, fill with fear; until we are brought to learn also that "His are the marvels of the microscope," and the full meaning of the truth that size is only a relative term. From XLIX. onwards I have put on paper thoughts upon a subject of the deepest interest to some minds, and surely of vast importance to us all—Life, or Mechanism! XCI. begins the next division, Boyhood, which, perhaps, for most will be the true beginning of the Poem, seeing that many, as I expect, will not care to follow me out thro the first ninety stanzas. CLXXXII. begins the next division, Manhood, and CCLXXIV. the last, Old Age. In conclusion, I believe my Poem is the first and only one of any length in the English tongue written throughout in true Sonnets.

A YEAR OF LIFE.

I.

MAN's little year of Life is only type,
Complete within itself, of all the years
That go to form the Eternity which nears
No end for all Time added : never ripe
Becomes this fruit of æons, tho the gripe
Of iron frost gives back, and on our ears
Fall voices of the Future, as one hears
The distant murmur and uncertain pipe
Of waking bird and water, when the thought
Of other things begins to throb and flow
Thro hearts and streams, by cruel winter caught,
To Death from what it would not have them know :
Streams suns and river long have vainly fought
Against the icy barrier—let it go !

B

II.

The rocks that glare down on it with their eyes,
 Grey lichens, bound in iron folds of frost,
 Have now no horror, all their strength is lost ;
 Lost is the freezing fear that filled the sighs
 The wailing winds raise, when the daylight dies
 Amid the naked birch trees that have tossed
 No bough, but rigid, interlaced, and crossed,
 And seeming mute, make winter's saddest cries.
 Loud echoes leap from the pined precipice
 As rocks and massy snows fall thundrously,
 Cut from the heights in many a monstrous slice
 With fury that would still, if that might be,
 The rushing of the river, as the ice
 Goes roaring, tearing, swirling to the sea.

III.

From bank to bank strange shadows sweep across,
 Are broken, lost, reformed, and swept away,
 And rainbow glories paint the tumbling spray,
 Flung on the rocks by the fast falling foss
 To make them green with ever emerald moss :
 The stream spreads out its bosom to the day
 To catch the rippled sunlight, bathe and play
 In its new lease of life, but still doth toss
 In stiller pools the broken bergs of yore
 Which imprisoned the free waters, that now roam
 Resistless onwards ; to turn never more
 Its downward course the river leaves its home,
 And all the dark-iced caverns on the shore,
 The bubbled mass of frozen fall and foam.

IV.

The umber shallows swell, late creeping rills
Now rush down to the valley, and the rains
Beat warm upon the snow that still remains,
And add it to the force which grows and fills
The widening banks, and leaping onward kills
All bar before its coming ; it despairs
The stays, late strong, grown feeble, for the plains
Are all before, behind dim lie the hills,
Seen thro the driving showers and drifting mist,
Now left forever ; all before is grand
With songs of promise from the low winds kissed,
The future summer-tides before expand,
The sun rides o'er a sea of amethyst,
A faery light lies on that unknown Land.

V.

The unknown Land, the days that are to be :—
O only perfect beautiful and bright !
O only perfect without shade or night !
In which the moments slip on lazily,
Against whose shores swims up a lazy sea
And clasps it in her arms, her bosom white
Laid o'er the land whose heart in every height
And valley trembles thro with extacy !
Those distant waters ever summer warmed,
Full of still sunshine, never seen, but dreamt !
Those young-world woods by no bold breezes stormed,
In wanton wealth of beauty wild, unkempt !
That far off Future, hope-begot and formed,
That still recedes the more it seems to tempt !

VI.

What of the Present ! It is poor and dim,
 Its bubbles only bubbles, and they burst
 Touched ne'er so lightly. What of all the First :
 The thought calls back the steel-clad season grim,
 The frantic struggle o'er the deep pool's brim
 To join the outward rush, the ice dispersed,
 The broken masses in the stream immersed
 Chilling its waters back to death, and him
 That was their death, stern Winter, hoary King.
 Each coming cape it passes marks more near
 The joyful times the Future seems to bring ;—
 Like milestones set upon a moorland drear
 Left one by one, till up the bright lights spring
 And happy voices greet the traveller's ear.

VII.

Our Life is like the life of streams and seas—
 The stream goes hurrying swiftly to the main,
 And on its journey ever cries, I gain
 A perfect peace when I have done with these
 Hard narrow banks and broidery of trees,
 And in the depths eternal rest obtain.
 O foolish river ! all in vain, in vain,
 A hopeless struggle, that knows but release
 From bitter gain to bitterer bitterness :—
 You make the ocean but to learn once more
 The Present has no peace ; and cove and ness
 Echo the sad sea's sorrow o'er and o'er,
 That breaks its heart with passionate ceaselessness
 About the stacks¹ and sinians² of the shore.

VIII.

Whence rose the river that still ceaseless runs
Into the Present's sea that swallows all ?
It cries for answer but there comes no call
From any green-capt capes and sandy duns :
Upon its bosom silent sleep the suns,
And even echo answers not at all :
Upon its margin crabs and sea-things crawl,
And mate, and match, and make them tribes and sons.
There is no early morning and no late
Long shadows of the future, but a stream
That circles slow, right on, and uncreate :
'Twould seem the waters always were, 'twould seem
Resting in space a Giant slept, called Fate,
Who dreamed all things out in an endless dream.

IX.

Morning or evening land it is the same ;
A twilight grey sleeps still above the trees,
No stir above but Fate doth send the breeze,
No sun shines out for Fate forbids the flame :
In all that is no Will asserts its claim :
A shadow lies upon the upland leas :
Yet still the gloom seems lifting by degrees
Showing past horrors but an empty name.
Sight pierces further bounds and sees more clear,
More clearly sees, but furtherest sight how small.—
The waves are glassy as some mountain mere,
No bird-note breaks the silence with its call.—
No sound, no stir, save only on the ear
The distant roaring of a far off fall.

X.

Fate dies away before it as it grows
 Upon us, Fate knows no development,
 And the now rising sunbeams that are sent
 Against it arrow-like, disperse ; one goes
 Straight to the heart, another overflows
 And floods with glory all the continent
 Lighting dark places up, and the event
 Is death to willess will ; the struggle shows
 Fierce forces working for the mastery :
 No settled frayless dream that sleeps without
 The chance of change, but thoughts that wildly
 Spring armed to birth 'gainst all with sudden
 shout.—
 So the calm lake is lashed into a sea
 While foamy breezes wheel and whirl about.

XI.

Cause clashed together atoms and we were.—
 Like drew to like in all, and the result
 Was Spheres and Systems ! Cause in the adult
 Long years of Time moulded a fitting heir
 In man, the crowning point of glory there,
 To make him lesser or lower would insult
 Our causer : life with us is no penult,
 No promise of a perfect future fair,
 But cause completed. O Perfection take,
 Thou Rottenness, our thanks !—Now hold the light
 Behind the broken skull and there will break
 From eyeless sockets new, tho borrowed, sight.—
 Nightly I slumber, but I wake, I wake,
 Then why distrust that little longer night !

XII.

Mists grew, and grew, and grew, and lo in time
 Worlds gathered into being, and, forsooth,
 Swung on in order thro their years of youth
Tho never Intellect worked in the slime
That formed itself, and fashioned in the Prime
 Designless loveliness and shapes uncouth,
 Self-made, self-working all ! This sounds like truth,
O Human heart that fain wouldst upwards climb !
 O Human hopes of happiness and pain,
 O panting Human soul that soars and springs,
 Recall your thoughts for all they are in vain !
 You are of Earth, wrought out of earthly things,
 As beasts that perish, clay entire, most plain
 No white robed Soul to which clay soiling clings.—

XIII.

Vile thought, show forth the truth of what you say ;
 You cannot point me out the single *Whence* !
 Trace back one element³ and tell me, “ Hence
From simple primal state 'tis changed today
To difference permanent.”—Can't cast away
 The old destroyed ? You cannot ! Nor dispense
 With that great impulse of celestial Sense,
The grand Design that orders every ray
 And atom. It is there, we see it still
 In dust grain dancing in the sun or in
The wheeling watches of the stars : that Will
 That ever wills and works, and we begin
To mar and measure it, and doubt, until
 Some tortured thought strikes at us from within.

XIV.

Dreams that we are ourselves that Will, and Part ;
 Sparks from the central Essence ; the Divine
 That is, and graspless fills the world ; in fine
 Portion of some impersonal mighty heart,
 Whose beat sends common blood at every start
 Thro countless veins and members ; that we shine
 Not borrowed lights, but lights that do combine
 In sum to form that Godhead, whose rays dart
 With life renewing all that doth decay
 Throughout the Universe of things.—As bees
 Swarm from the hive in streams and speed away,
 But in the evening from the laboured leas
 Remake their common-wealth, some thought would
 say,
 Ourselves returned grow one again like these !

XV.

Only Automata of single nerve,⁴
 Blind workers to blind ends of wax and cells ?—
 Not so, not so ! Within our manhood dwells
 Far more than merest instinct, how to curve
 Some line mechanic without change or swerve
 From century to century. Man's self rebels
 Against such thought : all time, all teaching tells
 Of man and man at angles. We conserve,
 Despite ourselves, a something that supplies
 The innate consciousness of I and He ;
 For all that from a vaster main we rise,
 We are no waves that sink back to the sea ;
 No thought of Death brings Death, as we surmise,
 To deathless Individuality !

XVI.

All, every particle that makes this man
Last year was not me^b : yet I am the same
In every whit unchanged ; not only in name
But being and hope, in matter thought and plan :
Here each few cycles since my life began
This change has taken place, still every aim
Of life is born from confidence and claim
On absolute changeless being. Then blame who can
The thought this body only is a dress
To be renewed as Spring the earth renews.—
Placed in this mad world's furious express
Where every stroke extracts its equal dues ;—
A buffer interposed to stave the stress
Of Earth on Spirit with fence of veins and thews !

XVII.

But who can show us Spirit ? In whose eyes
Has Spirit looked ? Whose brow has felt the breath
Of Spirit on it, and the voice that saith,
'Tis I, be not afraid ? To years of sighs
What answer comes in thunder, or replies
Of gentler sound than that which slumbereth
On evening lights and leaves, when unto death
The daylight draws, and half this fleshly guise
Is cast off from us ? Evening comes and goes
And brings no answer to the heart's cry, Where ?
The stars are steel and silent ! This Earth that
throws
Its darkness on us, tho broken here and there,
Is very potent : and against us goes
The javelin doubt and shearing sword despair !

XVIII.

No rest, no rest, conclusions are out-worn
 To father new ; these fade and fall away,
 And in their places other children play,
 Grow old, and weary weep that they were born.
 Or look back on their birth with bitter scorn,
 And pass, and are forgotten, while their day
 Grows more to evening. Bid the shadows stay :—
 Take knowledge, kindle up a fresher dawn !—
 We feel our littleness, we stand full face
 With the unknown.—Ah me ! we cannot cease
 To struggle 'gainst the downward rushing race
 With treacherous waves that widen and increase ;
 Broke on the rough rocks of its middle space
 We hang and cry,—is there no pool at peace ?

XIX.

No pool at peace !—the sources that we left
 Were better ; then we only saw the stream,
 We only saw it flashing, and the dream
 Of summer glory that was without cleft,
 And let no sad thoughts in thro any reft :
 Now the bright clouds whirl off like scattered steam
 Forced from some crater, and the lurid gleam
 Of tortured forces fills each hopeless crest
 Where human thoughts lurk hidden, till the brain
 O'er full and stupified deems it may be
 There is no haven that the heart can gain ;
 So turns to face the struggle wearily,
 As one that hears the winds that moan in vain
 Over the ceaseless sorrow of the sea.

XX.

Why wail the wild waves but that having known
 Moments of joy they never can forget,
 They sigh with more of hope than of regret ;
'Tis not despair that runs a semitone
Throughout their music, 'tis no discord thrown
 O'er all at random, but the eternal set
 Of the tide of things for better ; and the wet
Hard rocks wear down and will be overflown :—
 The winds cry out from early East to West,
 Seek and search out all sources and return,
 Are hushed an instant into childlike rest
 As tho they gained that peace for which they
 yearn :—
Life has its glimpses of a Future blest,
 The lifted veil we look beyond and learn.

XXI.

Our lives are formed in moments not in years,
 As some would say ; it is an instant makes
 Us what we are ; it is an instant breaks
Its javelin way thro the dull cloud that nears
 Piercing to hope beyond ; the gathered fears
 Of days or decades some bright point awakes
 From sullen sleep to trembling joy, that shakes
From its soft plumes æolian notes, and cheers
 Our hopelessness to hope : a single thought
 Is infinite to launch with sudden start
Our barque for good or ill, and we are brought
 To learn the source from which it had depart ;
Yea, looking back, when in some tempest caught,
 We see that beacon moment and take heart.

XXII.

We sail between two magnets o'er the main
 And we are drawn to each with equal force,
 Yet one that varies in the individual course,
 For each attracts and each repels again
 As we pass point and point of varying reign
 Round which our days are polarized : the source
 Of that strange sway we know not ; and the Morse
 Machine of human mind receives the train
 Of thought electric, but cannot record
 That all elusive current ere it flies.—
 We know the two that terminate the cord
 Of Life, but which the line between supplies
 With mightiest movement, and can most afford
 Us comfort, is unseen of human eyes.

XXIII.

What witness which is strongest in its sway
 The Past or Future !—All we see and read
 Upon mere matter and admitted creed
 To all, or in the fiery lines that play
 And turn the clouds of the unknown to day
 As rapid flashes follow and succeed,
 Half marked, half guessed, yet on no idle steed
 Of Fancy follow'd, for every flashing ray
 Tells of the quiver bright from whence 'twas drawn ?—
 We read the Past from what we know and feel,
 We tiptoe stand, or stooping, search the born
 And inorganic, and all that they reveal ;
 But with more certain knowledge comes the Dawn
 Of future things upon us when we kneel !

XXIV.

Succession, nothing but succession here ;—
Been and *will be* is all we dare to know,
There is a gulf o'er which we cannot throw
The bridge of thought ; but are the sounds we hear
From the far shore a fancy of the ear,
Stunned by the awful silence, and the glow
Beyond the darkness but an empty show,
Kindled on some unkindly atmosphere
By the vain longing eye ? The river brown
Runs to the sea returning whence it flows ;
So the winds circle ; wisest king and clown
Are equal here, and knowledge nothing grows ;
Save the Sun riseth and the Sun goes down
And hasteth to the place whence he arose !—

XXV.

O moments past what secrets have ye locked
Within the rugged breast of Time ! and we,
Who dimly read the Future, find no key
To open up that gateway barred and blocked
By the rough ranks of ages : we are mocked,
But by ourselves, for never mockery
Lighted the eyes of Time, that speechlessly
Looks down on us who all in vain have knocked :
Comes never whisper to us, but the brow
Is calm and peaceful ; and the eyes below
Look peace upon us : as some childish “How”
Or “Why” the Father answers, looking so,
Half-kind, half-pitiful. “Not now, not now,
My Son, but time is nearing thou shalt know !”

XXVI.

O foolish Heart that will not stay to seek,
 And from its painful flight a pleasure draws,
 Tho Time is silent of its buried stores
 And far beyond hears never sigh nor shriek !
 From very nature we will not cease to speak ;
 For that the laws that rule us are its laws,
 Because our ends are little, and because
 Its greatness stares against us who are weak.—
 We play like children on the shore, the tides
 Sweep up an instant and we cease and flee
 Our sand-heaps ruined, then it backward glides :—
 Still, looking on its waves that hoary be,
 This feeling speaks within and ever bides,
 The thought of us is older than the sea !—

XXVII.

We are of yesterday, and yet all Time
 Culminates in ourselves ; we are the young,
 Yet, when of old the morning Seraphs sung,
 And Stars were joyful in creation's prime,
 They sang of us ; now, after ceaseless climb
 Of Suns on Suns, the anthem out is rung
 By all that is, by every myriad tongue
 Of Nature, pointing up to the sublime
 In Man, Man only, who allows no peers :—
 Stars, Systems, all lie patent to his sight
 While standing on the Plain, but when he nears
 The unseen shadow of that awful Height,
 Still in the noonday of these later years
 He gropes as in the earliest darkest night.

XXVIII.

It makes the brain spin dizzy—where, where, where
Obtained existence first ?—I stand within
The thick-sown fields where, after mortal din
Of some few years, the Prince and Peasant share
A common corner of the earth, the air
Foretime was common, now made one they win
The same cold clay, the buried banks wherein
Monsters of primal birth and bone declare
Earth one vast charnel : ere our morning grew
To later light, the ancient ages sped,
That make thought folly, drag before our view,
As life's today, the question never read,
The gaping eyes made cold and stony blue,—
The still-eyed faces of our silent Dead !—

XXIX.

Trace back along the pathways of the Past
All that we certain know of Earth's today,
The furtherest plummet of science where we may
Down the profound of Time thence let us cast
And follow up the line, ere protoplast
Was in the fiery star dust,⁶ that, I say
With all acknowledged Science, held in sway
Became this little World of ours at last.
It was ; we are ; fill up the gap between ?—
Yes ! we can rung the ladder, but who laid
The side-stays from the Unseen to the Seen,
For from the first no blind-fold forces played,
But Law wrought out what was, from what had been,
In view of plans by some O'erseer made !—

XXX.

All is chaotic,—formless elements
 Not called to order for not yet the call,
 A sense of desolation to appal,
 Sense still there is of nearing far events,
 Whereat skies open, and vague continents
 Show thro the mirk, with promise that in all
 The unheard voice is working, but a pall
 Of inky black is o'er the turmoil sent
 And hides out hope, as shadows one by one
 Increase the darkness laid along the sky :
 Blind clouds that spread and shift and hide the Sun,
 Blind whirlpool thoughts that cannot gain reply ;
 No hope without of that which is begun,
 Within but sense of waiting wearily.

XXXI.

A morning breaks across a sullen sea
 With steaming waters, and a thick mist hides
 Above the waves, wherein no live thing glides,
 A tumbled continent of porphyry
 And granite, stern crystalline rocks that be
 Scarce cooled down from the intenser heat that bides
 Within the globe and tears its heaving sides,
 And from the Deep come thunders fitfully
 Whereat, perchance, some mountain rises higher,
 Whose smallest peak would dwarf our loftiest name,
 With prisoned power of gases that aspire
 To leap forth fierce and shake the solid frame,
 Like bubbling coal tormented on the fire
 By heat below and bursting out in flame.

XXXII.

O wrecks of things, begotten in the slime
Of early worlds of fern and giant moss,
And capes, low lying, where the wan waves toss
Sullen against the later land, and climb
The shallows to renew their shoreless prime
Even then of ages gone, and vainly cross
The flats to roll back vainly, with the loss
Of something left to mark the steps of Time !—
Large steps and lonely, where no blooms or buds
Made glad earth's garden, and the seas around
Were full of slaughter, things of kindred bloods
Preyed each on each, and tortured rapine crowned
The wild disordered order of your floods ;—
But what dread still was in your dank dells found !

XXXIII.

Life ! Life ! A teeming sea, a teeming land,
In all existence monstrous, weird, and vast :—
Across the flats gigantic shadows cast
From Pine and Fern, where many a mighty band
Of Earth's first fowl along the shallows stand,
Or trace the shore, or flock and follow past
The carved and fluted stems, and light at last
Where scaly Dragons, more than fancy grand,
Or crop the rank or fierce for rapine leap
Upon their prey in furious attacks,
Crushing the calami : where the tides slow creep
Monsters with river-necks and island-backs,
That sail or strive and slaughter o'er the Deep
Fought into foam and hoary with their tracks.

C

XXXIV.

Great river banks—a wide mouthed estuary
 With shallow sands and slowly shelving shore ;
 Large Lizards lurking on the reedy floor ;
 Creatures of warmer blood that cut the sea ;
 Swift footed Bands on wide campaign and lea,
 And broad brakes big with Bison, Bull, and Boar ;
 And fierce-named Beasts that slow and peaceful tore
 The banks for root and bulb, or bent the tree
 Too weak to bear them ; oft the sunset rays
 Gilded the cliffs where Bears and Tigers bred,
 Deep-caved and covered ; thro the leafy maze
 Mylodons moved, and Mammoths trumpeted,
 Begat, brought forth, and after many days
 These ceased from life and laid them with the dead.

XXXV.

What span of knowledge knows organic change ;
 Things seem eternal to our infant mind,
 The Past but one with what swims up behind,
 And range identical with further range.
 We see not progress as it is, the Grange
 And Palace symbolized in each shell ; we find
 The arch and column in the same designed⁸
 And still persist all is an interchange
 Of what has been, and not the type of new
 To be unfolded : since all Life began
 This the first cause that has been kept in view.
 What in the Future, what the higher plan,
 As cycles cease, no thought can follow thro ;
 We only know that these led up to Man !

XXXVI.

So much, so little, is appointed here
To us for knowledge ; we are wise to say
Long names, the little learning of today,
To class, arrange, point out, and on the clear⁹
Of Nature cast a shadow : as we near
The gushing fountain small birds cease to play,
And thro the darkened branches draw away
And stop their singing, chilled by the atmosphere
Of baser teaching, that, blind leader, calls
I see no sign of Him in what has been :—
But, nonetheless, in floods and waterfalls
That same obedience round us still is seen,
As when of old the seawaves rose in walls
And all the People passed dry-shod between.

XXXVII.

The time is come for other thought to be
Than that which makes a mere machine of us,
A concourse strange, or progress marvellous
From spume or spawn into this sentient me,
This soul within, this thing I cannot flee
That is, is, is, in spite of vain discuss.—
Evolved,—fought out by some fortuitous
Work of blind forces !—Than that Man should see
No more than this, 'twere better we should die
With the Greek gods about us, and the breeze
Flush on our cheeks, while in an extacy
We hear Apollo make his melodies,
With Cypris and the Muses standing by
And shy Nymphs stealing up from all the seas !—

XXXVIII.

Pomona, O Pomona ! from thy boughs,
 Crisp-leaved, and hung about with golden fruit,
 Let the wind whisper that thou art not mute
 Thro the full warmth of summer, but arouse
 From wilder ways the Oreads fair, that house
 Among the mountains : call the Fauns to suit
 Their partners, while the hollow breathing lute
 Some rough-coat Satyr touches, and allows
 The ordered music out till each shag trunk
 Sends forth its Hamadryad at the song,
 Tough twisted pine and knotty oaken hunk
 Lending their loveliest out to swell the throng.—
 Into cold death for ever have ye sunk
 That filled the early world and were so strong !

XXXIX.

Better to fall and worship at the shrine
 Of Phidias-fashioned Zeus, Olympian,
 And know, at least, that Manhood worships Man
 For some grand bond, and the innate divine
 That makes him feel he crowns the whole design,
 And is not atom in some planless plan.
 Be this the choice of Science, bloodless, wan.
 Then bid once more the early lights to shine !—
 They are not lost, they have not been in vain !
 Pan, Pan is dead ! 'Twere better one should say
 Pan, Pan lives ever ! Better from the plain
 Call corn-crowned Ceres, and the Loves at play !
 Call Dian from her woods, and call again
 Gray-eyed Athene from the past away !

XL.

There is a signet set upon the sand,—
The seal of some forefinger that has writ,
Alike on marble, marl, or crumbling grit,
Leaving the impress of the Mighty hand ;
That Man may so read off and understand
The power creative, which on every bit
Of rock or drift is exercised no whit
Inferior than upon His image grand.—

Each in its kind attains the coronet,
All things are perfect planned and perfect done,
But not less Man feels there is something yet,
Some apex unattainable, till the sun
Shall cease to circle, and the cycles set
Before the eternal Present of that One.

XLI.

Here Man feels ever eating to his heart
The iron eyes of Time that fill the place,
The cold clear stars and signs of shoreless space,
And aye the sad sense of his nothing-part
Rings in his ears, how small a thing thou art,
As all eternity with open face
Glares down, too grand for scorn, upon his race,
Who come with years must with the years depart.
Most weird and awful of all things art thou,
Which wast, which art, and which will ever be,
After sore struggle must poor Man avow
His soul has eyes that have not strength to see,
'Tis baffled, beaten back before thy brow,
Eternity, eterne Eternity !

XLII.

Eternal or *Æonian*, which you will
 Of term unto the termless, for the name,
 Whatever given, will but mean the same,
 And meaningless with all its meaning still
 Fall on the gaping human ear ; we kill
 Large things with little language ; we can tame
 All things to thought's dominion, but the claim
 Of two things more than thought, which aye fulfil
 A witness of His Presence, and ever climb
 Beyond the following of our fallen race ;
 We stand aghast and shake who stare on Time,
 And baffled brain sinks stricken before Space,
 Too weak, we cannot gaze on the Sublime,
 Like the blind People before Moses' face !—

XLIII.

We cannot give expression to the thought
 Of Time or Space, and hopeless is the call
 On mind to answer wish, our senses fall
 Before it dazed and daunted ; hapless caught
 In a blind whirlwind, as a leaf is brought
 And spun and twisted o'er some waterfall,
 And then blown back, while still the waves appal,
 Below its parent tree-trunk, knowing nought
 But sense of terror, rush, confusion ; still
 Some onward impulse seeing in the whole,
 Seeing there is that that doth itself fulfil,
 That all is from and making for a goal,
 Conscious the force that moves proceeds from Will
 Working throughout with an eternal Soul.

XLIV.

Above, beneath, here, there, and all around,
Thought, will, expression, law, till we can see
An almost human Personality,

And tenderness parental : for the sound
That fills this workshop aye is sweet : the ground
Beneficent bears and blossoms bounteously :
Things good or bad alike are cared of Thee,
And beautiful the very thorns that wound !—

O Power made evident by thy Spirit that burns
Confessed thro all thy works, these, that adore
Thy Presence with heart uplift and lip that yearns
For knowledge, now as from the days of yore
Ask where or whence, and no reply returns ;—
We feel but cannot grasp the eternal Law !—

XLV.

The only answer is, He reigns ! He reigns !

It fills the silence of the Universe,—
From Him the trembling rays of light disperse
In countless waves across the boundless plains
Of shoreless Space, 'tis He alone retains
The ordered order and harmonious verse
Of Chaos made creation by immerse
Of all things in His Spirit : a hand sustains

The infinite blue above with planets pearly,
Meteors and asteroids and all that are,
Comets and constellations onwards whirled,
Suns following suns, and from our own so far
That Neptune's orbit, were it one vast world,
Would only seem a system's smallest star !

XLVI.

And this but the beginning and no more
 And still the Soul is baffled in its flight,
 On—on—more stars, more stars, and then—a night
 Upon a waveless sea without a shore.
 And straight, as fell the fabled stone of yore,
 The Soul is struck down from its awful height,
 And strives to mount again in weary plight
 To fall back aimless as it fell before,
 With wan ing vanes ; the calm is broke, the rings
 Begin to widen from the centre out,
 We follow them, and frantic effort flings
 Its whole self in the struggle there about,
 Till thought made foolish and with wounded wings
 Fails and falls down in dizzy depths of doubt.

XLVII.

Doubt !—Never doubt, for He who sowed the stars
 Painted the feathers on the wee moth's wing,
 Yea verily a no more wondrous thing
 One than the other ; as a finger mars
 The delicate down, His finger o'er the cars
 Of Boötes or Auriga, as they swing
 In sidereal fire, deigned He to fling
 Their place would be no more.—A shattered vase
 Too large a symbol for ten thousand times
 Ten thousand worlds at His supreme command
 Past into nothingness, their morning chimes
 Of music hushed for ever. Yet the hand
 That helps our little life here as it climbs
 In sway of systems is no whit more grand !

XLVIII.

Our glasses search far o'er the seas of Space
Bringing new captives to our ken until
The thought of more grows foolish, we can fill
The vessel only to a certain place,
Or it o'erflows and in unseemly case
Holds less than at the moment it did spill ;
The power of mind is feebler than the will ;
Then what are we that He should turn His face
On us in full regard ! Mere foolish thought
In the fond heart called into life by hope !—
What, His infinities would we have brought
Pared down to suit our little finite grope
Against His attributes !—Ah we are taught
His too the marvels of the microscope !

XLIX.

Yea, whether are the stars more countless things,
Or all those teeming myriads that dwell
In every drop ta'en from the wayside well,
Or all the Bioplasts that weave the strings
And nerves and fibres of our frame, that springs
From countless sources into life, to tell,
To all who list, the daily miracle
Of Being, that from one point on widening wings
Successive moves eternally, the breath
Of Him that to all corners and all ends
Goes out, that never sleepeth nor slumbereth,
That all supplies, yet ne'er His Substance spends,
And ne'er takes back ; hence that, which we call Death,
Kills not the Soul that on eternal tends.

L.

Organic, inorganic,¹⁰ and the vast
 Wide gulf between them, whence the streaming Soul,
 His Spirit issues like a glorie,
 To crown and claim them both its work at last,
 Make up the Trinity of Things : All Past,
 All Present, and all Future, for some goal
 Fitly conjoined and making : spinning pole,
 Stars, circling seasons, winds, and wild wave cast
 Upon the ooze have in them Law ; and mind
 Can only be the cause of such effect.
 There is a Unity that works behind
 The missioned Spirit, and to disconnect
 The caused and Causer, is to feel the wind
 But to deny it as of no respect.

LI.

That Triad missioned forth upon its way
 Works to good ends. Its first the plastic mass
 Thoughtless and lifeless, whence is brought to pass
 Its second, and, as the Potter from the clay
 Spins out the vessel, is spun forth to display
 Therein the invisible third ; each in its class
 Perfect and changeless : not that in our glass
 We see no stain, or that no cape or bay
 Hath shot forth or curved in with impulse strange :
 But in creation, simple, absolute,
 Nought hath developed, nothing knows a change
 From then till now, in granite, grain, or brute,
 Or mind of man, and in their onward range
 Before this fact the very winds are mute.

LII.

All Nature's laws are changeless, for they are
The will of Infinite Wisdom once expressed :
His fiat has gone forth, and for the rest
Time gives good answer : star and wheeling star
Run on one course for ever, it would mar
His perfect knowledge, if the East and West
Changed signs and symbols, if some new behest
Reversed the cycles of the near and far :—
But all move only to a changeless law
Portioned to each, with bounds that all must keep ;
E'en so on shoreless sea or sea lashed shore
From all eternity's unmeasured sweep,
That ever present Presence brooded o'er
The troubled waters of the early deep.

LIII.

Are not the selfsame forces working now,
And, if the Presence be not there to build,
Is not the Stimulus, the Trouble, killed,
Powerless itself of Life or Death, or How,
Or Whence, or Where, mere matter, to allow
Or frustrate, impotent and dead, unskilled,
Unknown, unknowing, till that Power has willed
And Life leaps forth in Polyp, Beast, or Bough !
Round a great Cause that does its work indwell
Atoms and Systems, life and lives are furled :—
We see it in the pink whorled wonder well
Round its Creator like a garment curled :—
In every Sea-snail in its painted shell
Is visible God and working out a world.

LIV.

We have mere forces working here today,
 The same that worked thro all those early years,
 And these brought forth the life that now appears
 In all that is ! Be this the case, they may,
 Nay, must so work now, making broad display
 Of a continuous creation that rears
 A constant series of new shapes, and shears
 Or spins out life. Tho cavern, cape, and bay,
 Fail and renew, and winds and waters rise,
 Tide follows tide and stormwind follows storm,
 Creation nowhere exceeds itself, nor flies
 A further flight ; and this eternal norm
 Holds good,—produce spontaneously what dies,—
 All Nature's forces here are uniform.¹¹

LV.

Life ! Life ! We cannot grasp it ; it is God !
 He hides Himself in the ineffable ;
 We only know He does His work and well,
 But cannot see Him : pointed osier rod
 Trembles from Earth to Heaven with Him, and sod,
 Dew-gemmed and grassy, in each blade doth swell,
 With Him energic, but the miracle
 Escapes us tho we see it undertrod
 In every place about the world, we go
 Across blind-folded, if we see it not.
 What is it bids the Wilding bud and blow,
 Brings out in blue the first forget-me-not,
 Lifts up the early lily thro the snow,
 And forms the very fungus on the rot !

LVI.

The Spirit of Life, with subtle thread that weaves
A thousand varied tissues from one reel,
Flings forth his shuttle thro all things that feel
And to his bosom all feeling things receives,
As holds the harvest-hand the late cut sheaves
Binding them round, and, as soft breezes steal
Over the cornfields and themselves reveal
Only by play of bending ears, life leaves
No traces of its coming or going here,
Save that some rise and some sink back again
In that thick swathe that stands up year by year
Unchanged for all its losses ; with no gain
From all lives added to it ;—the full bier
And the full cradle make change work in vain.

LVII.

Our Life is not a finished act with us,
Once formed and finished, but a constant stream
Of atoms moving as no wildest dream
Conceived in any imaginings marvellous ;
No thought of fiery Gnomes that builded thus
Were stranger than what Science shows : the seam,
The ravelled web, the living threads that teem
And twist and spin new flesh ; beyond discuss
A living miracle working for all Time.
A something supernatural, breaking laws
Of rest and gravitation ; where as they climb
Atom stays atom, is repelled or draws ;
Design throughout in view, that here sublime
Points to the text they preach, a great first Cause.

LVIII.

We are the wondrous web a weaver weaves,
 Is weaving ever, and the pattern grows
 As shuttle moments fly, and manhood shows
 The proud plan finished for a while, but leaves
 The fabric's whence unanswered: he deceives
 Himself, who says the whole effect he knows;
 Whence is the silver thread to which he owes
 His being and beauty: ere a man receives
 His life, that life afore time must have been,
 A thread that is eternal, and will run
 From this to that continuous, as I ween,
 There to build up a fairer fashioned one,
 A robe more glorious than our eyes have seen;—
 Death dies, with Life a man hath never done!

LIX.

There must have been some where, some when, some how,
 A miracle to make life, its first germ
 Thrown into never so remote a term
 Needs still a miracle; to disallow
 This fact brands folly on the brazen brow
 Of him that knows not science: call it Sperm,
 Or Bioplast, or ooze-begotten Worm,
 The problem then no easier faced than now
 Unfaceable stands in all its fulness; this
 Demands that judgments upon the Unseens
 Be deduced from the Seen, the powerlessness
 Of Nature to *create* from her machines;¹²
 And in the name of known, and proved, and is,
 Reason rejects all “*mays*” and “*might have beens.*”¹³

LX.

We look on Life, but over Life there stands
Intention¹⁴ shadowing all ; we can defy
The deepest thought to answer and deny
That early Life with far-foreseeing hands
Worked to evolve the Universe that commands
Today our wonder and worship. No reply
That natural causes have identity
Of power and operation with the strands
That twist the cords of life so wondrous well
Could gain a hearing, save in bigot schools :¹⁵
The hardest, coldest Science stern will tell,
Loyal to law and logic's straightest rules,
No natural cause can make the miracle
That moves behind the moving molecules.

LXI.

The laws of Nature never can explain
Their rise and origin : who can disprove
They were *intended* to evolve, and move
To perfectness, the perfect plan we gain
In this round world and all the starry plain ;
The very fact that down one guiding groove
They run eternally would seem to prove
Intention ; and, as nothing is in vain,
The fact of this appearance of will must point
To an apparent Will ; the thought of laws
Includes the Lawgiver ; as the bone and joint
Designed Designer ; this the truth that draws
Down starry Faith, that ever doth anoint
Things with the chrism of a great first Cause.

LXII.

It is, and therefore He must be :—around
 We see it moving, working, breaking out
 In all the sparkling thoughts that play about
 Creation, like those bright flashes that are found,
 But unexplained, when with sun-rays is crowned
 The moon in his eclipse ; those rose flames rout
 Mere knowledge, for tho with lips set stern, and stout
 Of heart it looks, its eyes turn to the ground
 As knowing that it knows not. Who can look
 Against the sun undazzled by its light ;
 Or on the nature of things, an open book,
 From its great glory none can read aright !
 'Tis pity and not anger that should brook
 The moles that burrow and the birds of night.—

LXIII.

Thought cannot be without a Thinker ; thought
 Is in us and in all the Universe !—
 Then whence do all the trembling rays disperse
 Thro Space but from some Thinker !—We are taught
 By that, He is, as we are ; and are brought,
 By guidance of all things that are immense
 In attributes of Him, to read the verse,
 The finished Poem of Personal God we sought.—
 And Man is like to Deity ; we know
 Some little of ourselves and life, He all.—
 We do not claim identity, but show
 A somewhat of His nature in our small
 And sad but Heaven-born system, that from below
 His feet yet to a common Sire may call.

LXIV.

We have the thought implanted, the desire
To copy Him who made us, and create.—
We form, we fashion, hence we celebrate
Unconscious to ourselves, for love or hire,
Something we got of Him. No Poet's lyre,
No Artist's pencil, and no Graver's plate,
No Sculptor's chisel, that gives marble state
And wonder for the world, but shows the fire
That moulded, tried, and gave His image to us
I will ; I make ; 'tis only we that have
The power to will and make : the polypus,
Mere clockwork, builds its cradle or its grave.
Yet this, of all His gifts most marvellous,
How little draws us up to Him who gave !

LXV.

How great a cloud of witnesses stand round !—
How great the light that floods the Earth and Sea !—
Tho law and order working marvellously
Stretch to all stars, they carpet yet the ground
With green, where blue forget-me-nots are found,
Each perfect as a system's star may be ;
A larger language speaks the petals, and we
Read the forget-me-not inscribed profound
O'er the blue splendid stretch of sky above,
On the weest as on the vastest so designed.
And, even in Man's self, thought seems to prove
Some higher Mate existent, whence to find
Another evidence of that Infinite Love,
As something in us speaks and stirs the mind.

D

LXVI.

We are not single here, we know it : far
 Away beyond the daysprings of the East
 Thought stretches on and up and takes its feast
 Of knowledge, passing swift from star to star,
 And Spirit meeting Spirit without jar
 Feels flesh is nothing, when, the soul released,
 It lies the thing it is ; yet as that Priest,
 That Temple, here Man's Soul and Body are.
 Still speeds the race, tho' later fugitives
 Take up the torch and place of those that ran ;
 We know one dies, we feel the other lives,
 Part ever in that unimagined plan ;
 A twofold glorious gospel Nature gives,
 The gospel of the Spirit and Flesh of Man.

LXVII.

Mere subtle folly 'tis that would combine
 Matter and Spirit in one substance, for
 Mind sees no other means by which the law
 May be evaded neathe the hyaline
 Of logical idea, so seeks to twine
 The unthinkable in thought : a rope of straw
 And twisted sea-sand, twined for ever more
 With milk of human kindness and the wine
 Of human love, were parallel to this,
 More easy made, with fewer follies rife.—
 How square is Grief, and Pain how broad it is,
 Say, red or green or blue is Thought in life !
 How good is Choice to cherish, choose, and kiss ?
 How good Disgust to clothe, and take to wife ?

LXVIII.

Mene ! Thou art weighed and found wanting, here
The sources of the stream dry up, and all
Wade pitying thro the shallows : great and small
Have heard that word, and, stricken full of fear,
The Kings and Princes know the fateful year
Hath come to pass, when none shall hear them call :
The lifted maces at the portals fall
And dash the light out, leaving darkness drear;
And thro the palace roof that they have built
No star can shine upon them as they lie.—
Who shall take up the water that is spilt
Upon the sands, or who shall rear on high
The fallen tree ! *Thou wilt not and thou wilt*
Are East and West, and none can draw them nigh

LXIX.

The Ocean hath its tides but they retire,—
The tide of Time gives never back the day
It has o'er taken in its onward way
And swallowed up for ever : the great fire
Of ages tries the metals, and is dire
And death to all not gold : we cannot stray
Accepting but the tried and true for aye
That stands, and will stand o'er mere mind's much mire
The Past, and all the learning that it feeds
From its broad breast, each move towards their
goal:
'Tis not in vain that there He hangs and bleeds
Thro all the ages, for, as they onwards roll,
They set for Him and Truth ; and Science leads
Up to that something that we call the Soul.

LXX.

What, the soul's laws are but experiences
 Piled up from life in earliest simplest form
 And graven on our present Being ! The warm
 And cheering rays intuitive, that seize
 On mind with truth self-evident, appease
 No hungry human heart, and in the storm
 Must be rejected ! So the new reform
 Of third rate Thinkers write, and on our knees
 We must, forsooth, accept to see that killed
 Which is immortal among all mankind :—
 It comes to this.—Intuitions are the distilled
 Experience of years.—That mighty mind ¹⁶
 Cried, ages since, rejecting these to build
 Upon, no surer basement will ye find !

LXXI.

Human experience can not embrace
 All Space and Time. Experience must deny,
 True to itself, that everlasting
 These truths¹⁷ are true, for it has not searched Space,
 Stretched thro all Time, and filled up every place
 With its large presence : and yet nor you, nor I,
 Nor any brain that ever lifted eye
 Up to the silent stars, would dare disgrace
 Our saneness by denial. They are cast
 Eternal, with an everlasting impress pressed,
 Were, are, and will be, changeless aye will last,
 For they are truth made palpable and expressed :
 The small philosophy they sear and blast
 Is shattered on this certainty confessed.

LXXII.

Yea, over all *Intuition* stands supreme !—
I do defy you as it onward goes
To blow back on its path the wind that blows
Altho you see it not, and mayhap dream
You only feel it ; it is there I deem
And none gainsay the thing it overthrows.
So foolishness alone would strive oppose
That thought, which, with conclusion's shattering beam
Breaks in the brazen gate, and wins the town
Of those that make mere matter on our sphere
Account for Soul and Substance ; bringing down
The will, co-ordination, and meaning clear,
To be accounted for, by that mere gown
They wear, the willed or co-ordinated here.

LXXIII.

We know that Soul is in us, and we know
'Tis something that is self, and that it lies
Responsible for all the acts that rise
Against the body vainly, for the flow
Of constant atoms, that to make us go,
Change year by year ; Soul only never dies,
But is, and our identity supplies ;
The Rower rowing as a boat we row :—
The planks and timbers are renewed, the oars
Fresh fashioned here to pull upon the tide
Of things and time, and ever as the shores
We swiftly pass and would be satisfied,
Does boat meet boat and exchange all its stores
Of sympathy and love, or we inside ?

LXXIV.

We may be o'er set and another take
 The selfsame tools and timbers for his barque,
 But, tho' beneath the waters and our ark
 Swim freshly overhead, no men mistake
 Its captain for the one the waves unmake
 Of manhood or return ; no signal spark
 Of the old light within burns on the dark,
 But a new light to guide it for the sake
 Of the new master. Actors for awhile
 In the old play, we come and go, and put
 Our dresses from us till we cease to smile
 On any audience, others rise and suit
 Our old clothes on, fresh folly to beguile ;—
 The stock cothurnus matches many a foot.

LXXV.

Our flesh is in a state of flux and flow,—
 Change year by year engulfs us and devours,
 But yet we feel this body that is ours
 The same, responsible for every blow,
 Bruise, cut, and sin seared on it ; hence we know
 Something that changes not within :—the showers
 Of Spring behind the rainbow here, that towers
 Spanning the Seen and Unseen, change not its bow,
 Tho' all the myriad drops that show its rays
 Are passing every instant. O sublime
 The token set in Heaven, after the days
 Of waste, to mark the point no waves can climb ;—
 This changing body of us here displays
 The rainbow Spirit o'er the flood of Time !

LXXVI.

Something Death cannot kill, but separates
From bone and flesh, is Spirit : something man,
More man than man's flesh even. As we scan
The range that thought has built up of the States
Of Earth and the beyond, this hope awaits
The issue. All things as He well began
He will end well, and to that perfect plan
All things are working thro our strifes and hates.—
That Divine Unity, far off, without change,
Unchanging stands ; so in the hate and strife
This body works against itself, the mange
And leprosy of Earth, foul, ulcer-rife,
Unchanged unchanging thro its onward range
We see the Soul in all the plan of Life.

LXXVII.

We catch more than our hearts acknowledge here
In still small whispers, and the voice that speaks
Is but the answer to the Soul that seeks
Spite of itself for Him, to whom drawn near,
It draws near home. Thro all the ages clear
That whisper comes by leafy Southern creeks,
By Northern sea shores, and by Western peaks
Bathed in the sunlight, and by all the dear
New dawns the diamond East builds day by day.
'Tis planted there and nothing is in vain ;
No leaf falls like a moth upon the gray
Cold leaves beneath unnumbered, on the plain
No dash of dust the wild winds in their play
Catch up or drop but counted is each grain.

LXXVIII.

'Twere cruel, bitter cruel to be born
 Created with an instinct of the Home
 The Future holds within it, that will come
 For all of us, if it were placed in scorn
 There by our Maker ; so that over-worn
 And letting this life from us, in the tomb
 We should lie down and find an endless doom
 Of nothingness, extinction. O hearts torn
 And racked with doubt, not so, not so He works,
 He asks but fairness in your judgment here,
 From the known to the unknown, what conclusion
 lurks
 In the love displayed in finger, flower, or Sphere ?
 Those clouds that hide it, from the nether murks,
 Let lightnings touch them and they disappear !

LXXIX.

Who made the wing made too the needful air :
 Who made the fish made water where to swim :
 Who made the land and made the shapely limb :
 And made the eye to gaze upon the fair
 And all the beautiful of nature there :
 Who is all truth in all things made of Him :
 Who, when the evening waxes gray and dim,
 Made the moth's eye to meet the twilight, ere
 The Owl swoops out for his appointed night
 With eyeballs for the darkness framed and cast :
 It cannot be that He who worked aright
 So well and wondrously throughout the Past,
 Who made for each and all an apposite,
 Made without mate this greatest and this last !

LXXX.

The grand design for good in all we see
Points to a God and Future, the desire
For that far Home is placed to lead us higher
To that Home's Maker, both will granted be
In the long lights of that Eternity
That daily broadens on us, drawing nigher
As every moment sinks the little fire
Of vital life away before it. We
Have but to open Nature's book wherein,
First stooping down from his more secret state,
He with his finger writes, despite the din
Of questioners round, "For like, I like create."
Then fear not more than heart can dream to win,
Take hold upon his skirts, standfast, and wait!

LXXXI.

We have two eyes : one sees all things aright,
The other ever peers upon the dark
That lies about it, for the fitful spark
That time on time leaps up upon the height ;
Dim thro the distance of that gloomy night
The peaks and valleys it can hardly mark,
And, o'er the waves that lie between, no ark
Swims out for sign or safety ; tho a bright
Blue flash from falling meteor fills at times
And floods the land with light, it blazes out
Leaving all blacker darkness, till there climbs
A faint flush from the East, while all about
The reddening wave, that with the sea-shore rhymes
The eternal Harmonies, destroys our doubt.

LXXXII.

Imagination faints and falls away
 Before the awful face of God ! Unfound,
 Unfathomed, unattainable, and profound,
 But flooding all things as the light of day !
 God is in every Sphere and every ray,
 In form, in flower, in everything around,
 In thought, in thunder, and in whispered sound
 Of seas and sea shores in their plash and play !
 The Star that shoots across the Infinite
 Shows God and blazes out ! In life in death
 We see His pen move and His fingers write,—
 “Lo I am here !” None is that sundereth.—
 Closer than flesh thou hast Him, tho thy sight
 Before Him fails, who is thy stay and breath !

LXXXIII.

From all Eternal to Eternal all !
 Unnamed, unknown, yet everywhere expressed !
 We can but call Thee, as the East and West
 Leap up to call Thee God, and prostrate fall !—
 O Lord, O Lord, how poor our voice and small
 That fails and falters down, and for the rest
 We can but give Thee tears when lips attest
 No more, and silent have no cry to call !
 But Thou hast made us and we thank Thee Lord !
 We feel Thy finger in our hand to grasp,
 If so we will, and walk, and all abroad
 Thy smile lies like a blessing, and the clasp
 Of infinite arms is round us, tho Thy sword
 Hangs over head and thunders growl and gasp.

LXXXIV.

From bright Orion's belt across the sky
To bright Antares, Mighty Lord, I see
Thy arms out stretching! All Eternity
Lies open to Thy face, whence secrets fly
And wither up and are not! Yet Most High
Thou hast been, and Thou art, a man like me,
By Thy Word taking this humanity
And flesh upon Thee! Wherefore, when I cry
My voice goes up to tender human ears
Of infinite pity, and Thy hand of might
That opens the windows of the morning, clears
My eyes from doubt to see Thy will aright,
Quenches in darkness Thy unnumbered Spheres,
And closes here my eyelids for the night!

LXXXV.

All tends towards a Personality :
Our faith is nothing, if we have not One
Who is all faithful, and a living Sun
Round whom our lives may circle. This I see
In all that is, as friendship cannot be
Save twixt two Friends, no more can thought be won
To grant a love or hope or trust begun
But in the knowledge of Personal Deity!
The impersonal by the human heart is hurled
Away as empty fancy; ages long
That truth has lasted and the moments pearled,
Wherefore in manhood's trust I will be strong
And stand up straight for God, defy the world
And sling my pebble on the front of wrong.

LXXXVI.

Faith, with her sister, Science, sets the sails
 That bring my barque into the haven Hope.
 I have the compass but I need the rope,
 Either is useless where the other fails ;
 For without anchor in the veering gales
 The danger would be desperate, and to cope
 The storm unstayed were foolish. Wherefore grope
 Thro the dull fogs when overhead prevails
 The Heavenly Sun, if we but look above ;—
 Alas, for human hearts that seem to hate
 Assistance in the strife, and sullen shove
 Into the surge despair, and wail their fate,
 Nor heed the tender pleading of infinite Love
 Until the cry, Too late, Too late, Too late !

LXXXVII.

Thank God for the survival of the best
 And fittest ! Thank Him for the hardihood
 In face of bad to say all makes for good !
 Knowing this true, by this law we may rest
 Our weary senses on that perfect breast.
 From one Almighty Slain pours out the blood
 And pangs for all the centuries, that stood
 So long unsatisfied. Never darkening West
 But dawning East to follow ; even thro hate
 And human wrong, God ever works and moves,
 And what are we to cry his coming late
 Whose finite thought approves or disapproves
 Unknowing infinities ; better help and wait
 All safe in the assurance that He loves.

LXXXVIII.

I think, when writing in the dark of night,
How He that sets the Sentinel stillness round
And gives the Earth twelve hours of holy ground
Looks thro the dark as thro the clearest light,
And, tho I cannot see the words I write,
Reads clear the open book of things, profound
And wonderful, far piercing, without sound
Of move or motion holding all in sight.
His Name and knowledge go thro all that is
To catch our hearts when, ears aprick, we hark,—
We hide our weakness in that strength of His
When trouble and storm assail and smite our
barque,—
But 'tis at night we feel our littleness
And stretch our hands for guidance in the dark !

LXXXIX.

We have Orion and the Pleiades
To guide our course, we have the mellow Wain,
Dubhe and Merak ever pointing plain
To Earth's North star, night after night man sees
Them same and changeless, but with shaking knees
And hands spread forth he goes and gropes again
Night after night ; their light shines forth in vain.
For none of woman born there is who frees
His Soul from some dependence, tho he sit
Upon the throne of wisdom ; let him take
All Nature for a stay and lean on it,
It is a reed unstable and will break
And pierce his hand : wherefore, we hope no whit
For peace of Soul and strength, until we make

XC.

The Unseen Holy of that far off Land,
 Dim thro the clouds of sunset ; as he saw,
 Who sailed those silent seas and onwards bore
 With heart upheld and guided by the hand
 Of tender Hope, the Angel that doth stand
 With his twin brother Knowledge, pointing o'er
 The waves of doubt unto that happy shore
 Beyond the Evening West—to that more grand
 America than ere Columbus sought ;
 All desperate seas of doubt and danger past
 And madder perils from our crew of thought,
 For ever safe from wandering on the vast
 Into the infinite inner Haven brought
 Like that great Soul to cry, at last, at last !

XCI.

O the first flush of Boyhood, when our heart
 Sends the fresh current bounding thro our veins,
 And Fancy leaps up and flings loose her reins,
 And every muscle quivers for the start,
 To strike the spurs and fling the flying dart
 And hawklike swoop and scour the panting plains
 From sheer delight of life ! When no cloud stains
 The infinite azure o'erhead, no depart
 From deeper blue below the ocean knows,
 And all Earth's garments have not yet begun
 To wear that later autumn tint that grows,
 As the days weary over one by one :—
 For yet o'er all a flood of glory flows,
 As o'er the sands that vibrate to the sun.

XCII.

Boyhood alone knows boyhood : as we grow
The knowledge fails off from us, and our eyes
Turn from the setting to the glad sunrise ;
We feel the winds around us colder blow ;
Not the warm winds that fill and overflow
The flowers with sweetness from each cup that lies
Over before the breeze, with petals that rise
And nod to nodding boughs that o'er them go.—
O Life ! O Life ! When we can ask no more,
Nor wish for more, but only just to fly
Or chase the swift waves up and down the shore,
Or bask upon the upland rocks, and lie
Watching the Scarts, and Gulls, and Geese that soar,
Dreamy and drowsed by ocean's lullaby.

XCIII.

As the boat idly rocks a while, perchance,
Across the glassy wave the Divers rise,
Each casts his spear behind him as he flies—
His shadow on the waters—a long lance
Well pennoned where the sleepy sun-rays glance
Upon the waving tangles ; whence two eyes
Look you from under the rough statuaries
Hewn in the living rock, where an expanse
Mysterious of blue water stretches out
Of sight, dim in the darkness, as the Seal
Goes down and leaves three bubbles ; and a rout
Of Rock-doves from their nests the crefts reveal
Dash wild a-sea ; and round, and all about,
The screaming Swifts, and Terns, and Cliff-birds
wheel.

XCIV.

The Rabbits dream, or beat the sun-baked rocks
 In wary warning, listen, feed, and play
 Thro cairn and cairn, or spend the summer day
 In toilet grave of whiskers, paws, or socks ;—
 While glorious on the great hot basalt blocks
 The Lizard basks the morning hours away ;
 The young Gulls try their wings about the bay,
 Grow tired and rest ; and sleepy Ocean locks
 His arms about the Island, and their lips
 Meet in a long and ever loving kiss ;—
 A dreamy sense of things delightful slips
 On all, for never such a time as this ;—
 And lazy drawing down the great Sun dips
 Towards the West, that golden home of his.—

XCV.

O broad deep Sea-fields ploughed up by the breeze
 And white to foamy harvest ! O the blue
 God only paints His curtains with ! and you
 O infinite inexpressible sapphire Seas !
 One table of His infinite decrees
 Whereon we read His writing, ever new,
 Written and re-written day by day in view
 Of us, who only stand with stiffened knees !—
 O Evening o'er the waters, with the joy
 Of sunset and a promise of the dawn,
 To surely rise, that filled me, yet a Boy,
 With happiness, till I grew over worn
 With sheer delight of life nought could destroy,
 All one with Nature, glorious and unborn !

XCVI.

When every cave is palace fit for us,
When every rock some Sea-beast that up rears
Its rough-ridged head, when every wave that nears
Bears on its breast, half-hidden, marvellous,
Proud possibilities of Prince, if thus
We slip in from the strand and leave the years
Of Earth for some fair Princess, that endears
Each point and islet of this North. Discuss
These follies, call them vain ! Pah ! There she
calls.—

I come ! I come ! The Maidens in the Sea
Feared never Boy : and from the waterfalls
The Nymphs are full as bold, and suddenly
Spring out : and from the green hill palace Halls
The Fairies slip and dance and play with me !

XCVII.

Each rock, each pool like a pure Sister's eyes,
Each glen, each corrie has its man or maid
Who love the young : why should I be afraid
Who too am young ! The bubbles that uprise
From the deep tarn that twixt those two hills lies
Tell of the face that follows, and the staid
And solemn Hern, while poising that keen blade
His bill, would almost seem won to surprise
Before her beauty. She, the fairest fair
That ever rose from lily-cinctured lake,
That ever breathed the scented evening air,
That ever dared her waters to forsake,
Leans on his breast who stands beside her there.—
Ah, cruel day wherein the dream did break !

XCVIII.

Better the dream than never to have dreamt.—
 Better that loveliness should be and pass
 Than that it never should have been, alas,
 To be no more : yea, better the unkempt
 Wild forest ways to wander, than exempt
 From toil to see no beauty in the glass
 Held up by God to Nature, in flower and grass
 No power our thought from earthly thoughts to tempt !
 Better to murmur out, No more, No more,
 Made musical with sorrow, than to think
 No happy meads the Spirit wandered o'er,
 No diamond days, and dull and earthward sink,
 Clogged in the thick mud of that river' shore
 Whose name is Lethe unto all who drink !—

XCIX.

The Past lies ever, like an open grave,
 Wide mouthed to swallow swiftly all that is,
 Making no difference of bane or bliss,
 A tomb that knows no resurrection, save
 Those few faint corpse-light Memories that wave
 Their pallid plumes, and speak of that and this
 So sad, so soft, they scarce have power to kiss
 Sullen silence into speech, and scarce can brave
 The solemn soundless gulf that lies between
 Their land and ours ; and little they bestead
 Poor Man, tho' painting many a tender scene,
 But aye with trembling hand and heavy head
 And scarcely conscious of what change has been,
 Called up like Lazarus from the three days Dead.

C.

All things flow ever thro the Straits of thought
 Into the sea of gone, forgotten things,
 But ever to our Present's shore there clings
Part of the passing current that is fraught
 With all our lives ; a few stray straws are caught
 From those that rush on, as the rapid swings
 Them off once more into the stream that brings
All down into that shoreless sea, the sport
 Of Time's wild Tempests. Eager here and there
 We gather up that wreckage on the strand,
 But sudden mists, that rise up in the air
 From the wan waters, shadow all the land,
 And often, stooping to seize something fair,
 In the dim murk we grasp but senseless sand.

CI.

Here often when we think and gaze and brood
 On things that are, we sudden seem to throw
 Away this self, this me, and backwards grow
Out of ourselves to something that is good
We know, and feel, but not of us ; and, should
 We strive to give this formless something show
 Of earthly fact or seeming, it will flow
Swiftly away, until our senses hood
 Themselves once more in what was late supplied
 By something from another being brought.—
 Whence,—Whence,—he cries ; but vainly he has
 cried,
 Who finds the only answer to the sought,
 A feeling of babiness, thought wonder-eyed
 At man confounded in himself and thought.

CII.

Who holds the answer to such times as those
 That come upon us from the Past !—Tho Eve
 The vanished hours of darkened daylight grieve,
 Her gentle eyes behold the pink and rose
 Of Morn to follow on the night that goes
 Before the dawning ; and our hearts believe,
 Our heart of hearts, that all things know reprieve
 And have their times of permit and disclose
 To senses ceased from slumber : Pentecost
 Of holy witness all is not in vain,
 And, tho that river broad we ne'er have crossed,
 No thought of joy, no thought of even pain,
 Nothing that e'er has been is wholly lost
 So far that it can never rise again !

CIII.

So some dead Lady, known in years agone,
 Swims up before us, when we look across
 That soundless sapphire main the Albatros
 Of Memory searches :—then we stand alone,
 No other near us, by the well known stone
 Beside the streamlet, where the lilies toss
 Against the evening breeze that shakes the moss,
 Wee forest, full of life too, and the tone
 Tender with Heaven and hope falls on our ears.—
 O voice that once made Heaven of all, and eyes
 Wherein to look is Heaven, whose pureness clears
 This life from fleck and fouler taint that dies
 Before their diamond flash of God, the years
 Rise up between us but in vain they rise !

CIV.

So some dead Lady, when the lights are low,
Leans out before us from the space we see,
And nothing says, but gazing silently
Fills up our thought with thoughts that overflow
In utterance out. O fair face long ago
That held between those placid brows for me
The whole world waiting but a sign from thee
To be my own forever, speak and show
All are not lost that make that further shore !
Rest but a moment, let me touch thy hand,
Earth is so lonely that we wander o'er !
She comes, she comes, and we together stand
Clothed on with that full radiance bright once more,
The morning membrance of life's earliest land !—

CV.

So some dead Lady of the parted Past
A coin, a statue, or a face recalls,
And straightway down our heart in worship falls
Before the shrine ; but sudden overcast
By present clouds the Form pales out, and fast
A breeze skims up o'er memory's sea, and squalls
Buffet its raging surface, that appals
With tattered sail and broken spar and mast
The feeble craft that late launched on its main
With prow pushed for the sunset, never here
To break upon that Form in morn again;
No day to light it up and make it clear.—
Poor mind, you strive to reach it all in vain
That other half that rounds our hemisphere.

CVI.

So some dead Lady, lost beyond return,
 At mention of whose name we thrill and stir
 Despite the eyes that watch in naming her,
 Comes up and makes our cheeks and eyelids burn.—
 There are some lessons life can not unlearn ;
 Some shrines whose memory haunts the worshipper
 To other lands than this ; and musk and myrrh
 On other altars lifts the soul to yearn
 Half sick against the present for the years
 Dead in the past, but rising instantly
 To that which cries “Come forth.”—Ah naught
 appears
 Of all that round him, tho unseen, must be,
 Who sailing o'er the waters only hears
 The sad pulsation of a shoreless sea !

CVII.

God holds us by the finger while we walk
 This world in Childhood ; ever lingering
 About us then we feel the angel's wing,
 And, half-unconscious, hear the angels talk :
 But the years dull our senses till they balk
 Our ears of hearing and our lips that sing,
 And from our path fright every lovely thing,
 And, like as from the winter Crane and Stork
 Fly far away, our Memory flies a-far
 Leaving a barren land, a wilderness,
 With no fresh flowers to greet the morning star,
 No happy meads in summer emerald dress,
 But brackish pools and swamps and flats that are
 Too sad and hopeless e'en for bitterness.—

CVIII.

O dear wee Lads and Lassies laughing round,—
The purest prettiest blossoms of our Parks,
Late may that dull day come whose nearing darks
The life that hereto ye so bright have found !
Dear Daisies, white and pink, that glad the ground
Neath those old trees with spring, and song than lark's
More sweet and sinless, with no tone that marks
An echo even from that dim profound
Whence sad cries falter round us as we grow !—
Fair Flowers that overhang life's swelling stream,
But only see its silver, and the glow
And gold with which your delicate petals gleam :—
Like those great gracious forms we only know
Ere breaks the glory and gladness of a dream !

CIX.

From the swept shores and level lakes that lie
Among the windy mountains, where the mist,
From milky opal into amethyst
Gloried by the new Sun, lifts up more high
And lets the light thro on him, steadfastly
He moves down to the plain ; his forehead kissed
Warmly by the fresh beams but late uprist,
As, singing “the King's music,” passing by,¹⁸
He hears from every flower and petal curled
“A sort of They”; those unseen Presences
That hover round us in the larger world
Of Childhood, ere life's later sequences
Shear sternly from its stem the flower unfurled
To meet the “They” of daily “Yous” and
“Mees.”—

CX.

Held in the hollows, wet with waters wild,
 Our later years lose sight of land, and leap
 To meet the voices calling o'er the deep
 That whisper comfort still to every child.
 Talk of the agony of one exiled ;—
 'Tis naught to his, who sees his exile creep
 Daily upon him with resistless sweep
 To write upon his forehead clear—"Defiled."
 O Boyhood, Boyhood, dying into dark
 From the clear glory of that early prime !
 Have you not kept one faint, one flickering spark
 Of that new torch once lit from the sublime,
 When first your wayward Soul sprang to its mark
 Fresh from the mystic morning of all Time !

CXI.

I turn to Childhood and I ask of it
 What Boyhood cannot answer.—Whence the flash
 That lifts, at times, the sweetly-drooping lash
 To look afar from where the Soul doth sit
 In flesh almost as pure,—but gain no whit
 An answer to the thought that tells the plash
 Of cool green waves against the shore, and ash
 And oak and willow green o'er head, and tit
 And thrush and dove among the boughs, and coote
 Rippling the water that no breeze annoys
 And wrinkles in frowns, where rushes shoot
 About the banks with flowers and myriad joys
 Of summer, butterflies and ripening fruit,
 And half remembered forms of Girls and Boys.

CXII.

O Baby eyes how fresher far from Heaven
The lights that fill those liquid depths of blue
Than ours grown older and of duller hue,
That lose some light in every struggle striven
Where every touch makes baser ! O the riven
Clear clouds that on us let God's lightnings thro !—
We cannot face a child's pure gaze and new
From God, but that we feel some unforgiven,
Some secret sin, cries for forgiveness out
“ Unclean ! Unclean ! ” before the awful might
Of spotless purity : and yet about
Our head in Childhood played that dazzling light.—
The gladness of the morning who can doubt,
But what explains the secret of the night !—

CXIII.

There's some mysterious plea in Babyhood ;
A prayer for pity, and so full of trust,
That, spite his will, the very Levite must
Turn ere he passes and afford it good.—
The pitifullest cry is that for food,—
Starvation cries up strongest from the dust ;
It is no question of weak, vile, or just,
But the one language of our humanhood
That, from one source going out to every Land,
No Babel babbled into diverse tongue.—
Folly perchance : yet some may understand,
When knowing not the doom that o'er them hung
Who played together, I have stayed my hand
And spared the very Scorpion and her young !¹⁹

CXIV.

The higher instinct of humanity ;—
 That feeling for the helpless felt and sung,
 Had first its utterance from no human tongue
 But came straight to us from the Deity
 In His inferred command to man. “ Let be
 And see thou take no mother from her young.”
 And never woman yet her Babes among,
 But seemed more Angel : for all infancy
 Is angel-guarded ; the reflected sight
 Shines from her eyes and lips and all her face
 In those pure moments of her deep delight,
 And gives her more than mortal glow and grace ;—
 Unseen but felt a Presence over bright
 Makes holy ground of all that happy place.

CXV.

I think the saddest sight that I have seen
 Is a poor cripple Child among the flowers,
 And fields, and streams, and all the tender powers
 Of singing birds, and murmurous lindens green.—
 The sweet wee face and shrivelled limbs have been
 A strong reproof against me, when, in hours
 Of doubt and trouble neath the passing showers
 Of disappointment, I have filled with spleen
 And thought myself illused and hard of fate.—
 Poor crippled Child ! To think one could not run,
 And swim and dive, and early morn and late
 Roam o'er the mountains with the rising Sun,
 And watch the Evening till the golden gate
 Westward closed round the God and day was done.

CXVI.

To think one could not chase the butterflies ;
 Use gun and rifle, spear, and shaft and sling ;
 Or catch the wakeful wild-fowl on the wing ;
Or watch the mist each moment higher rise
And, drawing off, lay open to your eyes
 The Elk or Bison ; while the tall trees ring
 The Bell-bird's notes out, and the squirrels spring
From branch to branch ; and all the wood supplies
 The good smell of the morning ; and afar
 Beneath you the thin thread of smoke goes up
 Like some tall tree-fern, by that shining star
 The river pool in its green sky, the cup
 The hills' clasped hands make ; and the closing bar,
 Blue far away, the Peaks that rise abrup'.

CXVII.

No longer in the East, but far away
 In that large Land of cataract and pine,
 Watching the Wolverine in the last sunshine
Ere Night's dark finger curtains out the day ;
The Otter and her young ones all at play ;
 The burnished Beaver in the hyaline
 Of that blue lake, and hard at work to twine
The new boughs in his Dam ; the Teal that ray
 And splash the water out in rings “ Teat ! Teat ! ”
 A twig snaps, off they go ; behind the tree
 A dark form moves, your pulses quicker beat,
 As from the shadow stalks a Wapiti,
Drinks and is gone ; weird sounds your presence greet,
 And the fierce Puma's melancholy cry,

CXVIII.

The Moon breaks from behind a bank of cloud ;
 And high in air the arrowy Wild-goose
 Break with their strident wings on the still fleece
 Of snows, until they die away less loud
 Lost to the South ; and from the lake a shroud
 Of gauzy mist goes up ; and all the peace
 Of the Eternal peaks fills the decrease
 Of parted day with blessing. Nature's vowed
 And single-standing wakeful Vigilant,
 The cold North Star, watches the galaxies
 Swim round their Sovran, ever ministrant
 Thro space and its illimitable seas.—
 The pure pale moonbeams stripe the glades aslant ;—
 A wind wails thro the Pine and Willow trees.—

CXIX.

Lights dim and die away, and in the East
 No new Sun rises.—Boyhood loses this,
 All the old joy of living, and the bliss
 Of absolute life, when every day increased
 Our joy not sorrow, and the days deceased
 Brought but the feeling that sheer weariness
 Of too much goodness brings. Ah me ! I wis
 We most or all have felt it, or at least
 Some brief bright moments took us by the hand
 Lifting us up to feel it, till we stood,
 As I have often stayed my steps to stand
 Beside some vale in that sweet solitude,
 That made God's Presence felt about the land
 And whispered to me all was very good.

CXX.

How we grow crippled as the days go o'er!—
The flowers are there that once we used to pick ;
The songs and birdcalls that we were so quick
To hear and capture ; and the scents that bore
Us far away unto that other shore,
Now scarce remembered, but whose memories prick
The Present till it bleeds ; and we grow sick
In listening to the future years that roar,
An endless river down the vale of Time,
With never sea to make and peace at last.—
Who leaves the source can never backwards climb,
Or make again the moments he has passed ;—
Recapture at his will the vanished rhyme ;—
Restore again the brightness over cast.—

CXXI.

Thou art of other Lands than these of ours,
O Love, O Love, that risest up between
Myself and all the Fairest I have seen
On this dull world ! Thine is a place of flowers
Made faint with too much sweetness, where the bowers
Know never winter, and the summer green
Of carpet grasses knows no Eastwinds keen,
But smiling suns and gentle April showers.—
"Tis not at will that I can make that Land,
Nor can thy will recall me there, I wis ;
But something summons me, and lo I stand
With thee, or somewhat summons thee to this !—
There's something over us, a higher hand
That plays at random, makes or mars our bliss.

CXXII.

Thou art that something which with all of us
 Is felt and sought but never is fulfilled,
 That springs to meet us only to be killed
 By that dividing Fate mysterious.—
 When thou art near 'tis useless thus and thus
 To say, I felt thy coming here distilled
 Thro every fibre, and, as I have willed,
 I will return to that land marvellous
 The which I oft have made to meet with thee.—
 For, ere the voice has died upon my lips,
 I am alone, and crying hopelessly
 Upon a Form, that, like the silent ships,
 Swims slowly out upon an unknown sea
 Till far clouds hide it in some strange eclipse.

CXXIII.

Glimpses are all that I can give, stray gleams,
 Of what may brighter shine behind the cloud,
 Of what some day may answer me aloud,
 That now but whispers to me in my dreams.
 But split and broken tho they are, the beams
 Of that great glory lift our hearts and crowd
 The chambers of the soul, this earth would shroud,
 With angel shapes and faces, tho it seems
 All in the end take but one face and shape ;
 We stretch our empty arms and grasp the air,
 Our kisses lost on that that doth escape,
 But to return, when we expect not, there,
 As silvery mists skim off and round the cape
 But sudden sweep back and fill all the air.

CXXIV.

Hast thou no Face more than all others are,
That ever at a word swims up and out,
From the dim Infinite, and puts to rout
All other thoughts, and drives away afar
All faces from its glory? Sun and Star
Such the comparison!—And all about
The Sun such lightnings play, that, never doubt,
The lesser lights pale out and vanish. Ah!
That Sun-bright Face comes up on one, and dim
Grow other loves and longings, and his hands
To other Idols raised fall down, and grim
The Past looks out on him from other Lands,
Who feels those other eyes regarding him
Where spell-bound in an instant still he stands!

CXXV.

That Face! That Face! It rules our life, and sets
Our actions in the groove down which they run:
It draws us to it as the potent Sun
Draws spheres and systems. O the many nets,
Silken they may be, that with vain regrets
Mesh in our feet! I doubt not every one
Has wandered thro that valley, ere begun
His heart to climb the Southern slopes, with debts
Enough to the pale Past to last him thro
The longest life that any of us here
Would hope or wish to capture. O the blue,
Pure from the zenith to the horizon clear,
Neath which we started; till the thought of you
Brought golds and crimsons—but they disappear!—

CXXVI.

'Tis sorrow makes the Singer, tho may be
 No outward sign of sorrow marks his face,
 Or shows him hapless in some happy place.—
 Ah well ! For all its sparkling waves the sea
 Is full of darker hollows, and, tho free
 Along the shores its waters curl andrace,
 There's something holds them ever down to lace
 The strand with delicate foam-work, and to dree
 A Fate that says "no further." Hence its song
 Full of vague yearning ever unfulfilled,
 Full of strange import as it moves along
 Round old Earth's shores, oft checked but never
 killed :—
 So too with us, than any seas less strong,
 We cannot make the one thing we have willed.

CXXVII.

A Face, a Form, a Wind, a Voice, a Flower,
 Are potent ever to bring up the Past,
 And make the heart beat from the lips "At last,
 At last draws near the longed for, prayed for hour!"
 But ere an instant passes goes the power,
 Hiding the moment deep down in the Vast
 That lies around us, into which are cast
 All earth's sweet things to wither, wane, and sour.—
 Ah, we are Poets ere Philosophers !
 Else we would never sigh for what is vain.—
 Yet something in that Queenlike face of hers
 Seems to me full of promise, and the gain
 The Present cannot give us, but defers
 To that far time to rise and to explain.

CXXVIII.

Love, one day thou art one, anon a change,
Thou takest another shape, and in thine eyes
Tho meet a thousand rays of Paradise,
The thousand rays thro every colour range.—
Our Soul seeks many a Stedding, Hall, and Grange,
Tall Castle, humble Cot, each one supplies
A one day's resting-place, till we arise
And journey on to what is new, and strange,
But only satisfies a moment's space ;
We leave the Past and wander far and near,
And every Past the Present doth displace
With wild-eyed thoughts that rise and disappear :—
Beyond them all swims up that Face, that Face,
That still draws back the more we seek it here !

CXXIX.

Our boyish loves grow little and depart
With Fauns and Fairies from this world of ours,
For as we lose the outer, the inner Powers
Fade slowly out : we grow less large of heart,
One, only one, suffices and keeps part,
Not part but all of us throughout the hours.
No more we bee-like suck from many flowers
The sweets of Summer, but all Summer's mart
Of sweetness find in one, that one our own,
With lips and eyes that smile us and approve.—
The sweetest strains are those of blended tone,
Wherein one Man and Maid the numbers move.—
Our happiest days are those we spend alone
With her whose name, made musical, is love.

CXXX.

O Early dreams of Love's young days ! Dear dreams
 Full of sweet faces, half forgot, that rise
 Between the Present and the starry eyes
 Of Fairy forms, and Fancy fled that teems
 With all of bright and fair : a Past that seems
 No more of earth or bound by earthy ties,
 But to our moiling moments here supplies
 Sight of that Heaven and the glory gleams
 Of our forgotten Home. The Violet
 Of fond remembrance purples all our ways,
 Aye the one jewel in Life's coronet
 That floods the light with tender amethyst rays.—
 Like the Moth Memory from the Flower Regret
 Eve too draws out the dew of happier days !

CXXXI.

A sky all India as the eve closed in,
 A sweet Psalm after the strong Chapter day,
 Softer and softer as it died away
 And in the West dark clouds began to win ;
 Yet sorrowing for a victory wherein
 They marred such beauty : solemn stillness lay
 On all around, but not our stillness—nay !
 For, tho no sound there was that did begin,
 Deep dale and valley all were over flown
 With that which comes up ere the dark may be,²⁰
 A wave of prayerful silence softly blown
 O'er leagues of land and palm and forest tree,
 And all the hills imperial purple grown
 In the long sunset leaning from the sea !

CXXXII.

Where last remembering sunset such as this
Passed we together, Love, beneath the trees
Ere early Summer ; when the lingering Bees
Sang homewards past the sedge, that stooped to kiss
The quiet waters ; and the silent bliss
Of our old earth after the rain, on leas
And uplands brooded like a blessing ; while frieze
On frieze, and pile on pile, no shape amiss,
The painted clouds did in the West receive
The parting Sun : the heath grew deeper brown,
The loss of light and Love had I to grieve—
They called us back—tho other eyes did frown,
The resinous balm of firs made sweet the eve
And all the twilight Stars looked mildly down !—

CXXXIII.

Months past we stood in Nature's Springtide house.—
Their dainty delicate and blood-red crown
Tipped all the tiny nut-buds bending brown
Above us, and neathe the varnished birchen boughs
Swelling with life. Ah ! what a gay carouse
The wild woods had with Spring's new wine, where down
The diamond dew dripped on the webs, to gown
And spread with subtle tracery marvellous
The tender rose-pink blossoms of the larch,
And buttons of folded leaves that here and there
Were breaking out in green, where arch on arch
The firs and lacing pine-trees cut the fair
Blue sky of Heaven with ferny fronds, and starch
And stiff the poplars leaped into the air.

CXXXIV.

On every black-branched Hawthorne's finger-bough
 Breaks out an emerald ; struggling with the mould,
 The woolly fern thrusts up into the cold
 From the warm earth that blankets it ; and now
 Its wee green mitres, fairy Prelate's brow
 Knows other none, the lilac growing bold
 From joint and joint brings forth ; not yet unrolled
 Its broader pennons, like warrior under vow,
 The fig at once shoots out its sombre spears,
 But tipped with tender green to burst in leaf
 When conquered Spring a captive bound appears
 Before the laughing face of Summer brief.—
 Yet know, my Love, 'tis Spring that most endears
 Itself to all with signs that help belief.

CXXXV.

An English morning full of the blown balm
 That brought the breath of clover and lucerne
 From leagues of meadow, that began to burn
 And blush with ruddier red ; while o'er the calm
 Lake's reedy inlets, quick from arm to arm
 Of mimic cape, the cootes with dive and turn
 Shot swift or sudden ducked, where solemn Hern
 Watched well the water world their fishy farm.—
 The harsh wheels grating on the gravel stout
 That ground its teeth in anger, put to flight
 My happy fancies, as my Star paled out
 And left the landscape empty of delight ;
 For tho the birds were singing all about
 That glorious morning, O how dark my Night !

CXXXVI.

Again my memory swims up like a sea
And leaves rich treasures on the shores of thought ;
Bound by four walls our two young lives are caught
And mixed together, for a time to be
What Fate mayhap intends for you and me :—
Ah, tho the loom of Nature never wrought
The curtains here that over-seas were brought,
The poetry of thy presence, sympathy,
Thyself, thy spotlessness makes Eden here,
The ground is hallowed round thee where I stand,
My heart beats higher, and upon my ear
Fall nobler promptings, I feel impulse grand,
Transported from my common day life dear
A happy Soul set free in fairy land !

CXXXVII.

A low sweet voice, and eyes of baby blue
Like the wild violet all dewy bright ;
Twin sapphires shining in the morning light,
Full of strange potency to look you thro
And read your very heart ; her own heart true,
True and untainted still, tho all delight
The subtle world spreads round to tempt the sight,
If but a moment, from life's grander view
And higher aims and actions : courtly grace
In every movement calm and self possessed ;
So small, so sweet, Cupid without disgrace
Mistook her form for Psyche's in his quest ;
And, if he loved who looked upon her face,
What are *his* thoughts who hopes to own her
breast !

CXXXVIII.

A soft low voice, which is of all things here
 Most sweet in woman, and of all earthly things
 In health and sickness and what fortune brings
 Most lingers long, most deeply doth endear.
 There are no thoughts that haunt us ever near
 Like thought of some loved voice, that swells and sings,
 As from a sea-shell, thro the quivering wings
 Of Memory staid a tip-toe stretch to hear.
 Ah Love, that voice is thine, and eve and morn
 And in the stiller times ere light may be,
 Ere baby hours bring in the pinky dawn,
 It steals into my heart and calls to me,
 Like those soft sounds in summer sunsets borne
 Upon the sweet lips of the solemn sea !

CXXXIX.

Two willing feet to rise and run at need,
 Two willing hands for every trivial task,
 A will so bountiful that, ere tongue can ask,
 The wished and willed is an accomplished deed ;
 No haughty Dame for whom to fall and bleed,
 But just a sweet wee winsome woman mask
 Hiding the Angel in her, with a flask
 Of boundless human sympathy, and seed
 Of kindly words to sow in every heart :
 No thought for self but thoughts for all around,
 And tender balm of pity for the smart
 Of the world-wounded, so with glory crowned
 Fresh from her Father, evil to depart
 From her is fain as from God's Holy ground.

CXL.

My Love is like a garden, where the hums
Of bees make sweet and sleepy all things there
With over-much delight, and perfumed rare
With odours faint of myrrhs and labdanums :
I know her nigh ; for so against you comes
The balmy, soft, warm, silky-scented air,
As dainty Ladies pass you on the stair,
A vision of white and flowers ; and language dumbs
That cannot give expression to the thought
Which takes you from this world that is of us
Into that one that all have vainly sought,
Still, pleasant, half-defined, and marvellous
With falling waters and large lights, untaught
To dim to sorrow and beyond discuss !

CXLI.

The days that pass in thought and toil away
Bring no sad hour so sad I cannot see
Its darkest edge gilt o'er by thought of thee,
Its murkiest moment mellowed into May.
Here every breeze comes fresh from happy play
Round your bright neck, and breathing balmily
About your bosom ; the leaves that whisper me
Have sister leaves that whisper where you stray,
And fill my thought with thoughts of thee, and bring
Pure fire from the altar of the Holy Unseen
And cleanse my lips, and with a Seraph wing
Lift up my Soul from earth and make it clean ;
I cannot dream how man may be a king
But feel how woman is a crowned Queen.

CXLII.

Ah Love, you are the lodestar of my life,
 My lamp, my light, my moon behind the cloud
 O'er this dark world, the voice of Heaven made loud
 And eloquent with music o'er the strife
 Of jarring days, the running fountain rife
 With flashing beams of glory ! In the crowd
 Of common kind, where open and allowed
 Is wrong, I've hope in thought of thee as wife.
 For, turning sad from those that stood about,
 In thy sweet presence I've felt the same delight,
 As when from red-eyed revel and noisy rout
 And crystal glass grape-gleaming to the light,
 I softly stole away and wandered out
 To worship neath the stars of Southern night.

CXLIII.

Ah Love, this world is little when you look
 Only at what affects the world ! We stand
 Within a garden, and on either hand
 Grow gorgeous flowers beside a purling brook,
 Bright scentless blooms of bees and birds forsook,
 An empty loveliness upon the land,
 From which the wiser turn when they have scanned
 And read their petals like an idle book.—
 That whirling world has little in it, Sweet,
 To end and satisfy ; each petty strife,
 Each gainless rivalry, will but defeat
 The evening peace with legioned shadows rife.
 O turn aside from these to pluck and eat
 The full fruit hanging from the tree of Life !

CXLIV.

Is there no bitterness in early years
Flung forth upon the world with no return—
Do not the giddy moments rise and burn
And sear the heart with grief too great for tears !
No thought the Past is nothing, if the fears
Of being unfulfilled can rise and yearn,
But a moment be it, for what the Past did spurn
As nothing, whose memory now is all that cheers !
All actions here bear on our future life :
To shape and fashion nobly, truthfully,
The coming days, the Present is a knife ;
And any wrong done to this *you* or *me*
Is wrong done to a Husband or a Wife
Hidden in the future light that is to be.

CXLV.

O Womanhood, how does the world drag down
Your greatness to its level ! Are your eyes
Less starry that they look on Paradise,
Your steps less queenly that in quest of crown
Immortal, stainless of the baser brown
Of Earth they walk the land ! O witcheries
Of worldly vileness, whereby some devise
Your hearts at value of a gaud or gown !
You are the soul and the diviner plan
Worked out ; the godhead of the unity
Twixt flesh and flesh ; the spark Promethean,
As in the fabled fennel, here we see ;
Your highest birth-right is to lead the man
Above himself to find his Heaven in thee !

CXLVI.

It is not little that I give thee, Love !
 True manhood such as gold can never buy,
 And all the dower of immortality
 That promised love brings with it, so to prove
 Its Heavenly home and issue ; never move
 Of heart to heart, but heart was bidden try
 By other heart that called it, wherefore I
 Have dared to lift my eyes to look above,
 And hear the half-whispered word that consecrates
 Me Knight, and Priest, and Man ; and on my brow
 Writes holy, set apart to one that waits
 A warrior and a priest by sword and vow ;
 Whose lifted finger points the golden gates
 From whence the glory flashes even now.

CXLVII.

My life is in your hands to make or mar,
 Give me thyself and we will plant our feet
 Together on the ladder of today, and meet
 The coming changes that resistless are ;
 But what sea could I fear with thee, my Star,
 My Guide, my Compass, Stay and Hope ! Ah Sweet,
 The years are failing and the years are fleet,
 We have to roam so lonely and so far !
 And O my heart is weary for a Friend
 To love for ever more and ever more !
 A little while together we may wend
 And then it faileth, and the waters roar—
 Who says that Love knows fulness or an end,
 Or that it ceases on that further shore !

CXLVIII.

God, what a thought ! Tho our poor life may be
For scorn and spitting brought before Thy face,
The weakest thought of love none can disgrace,
For it is holiness, and part of Thee,
And infinite and pure. Yea verily
Only the pure can love, or those that place
Before their eyes Thy Purity, for this Race
Of ours is ghastly leprous, nor can see
But Thy One life untainted : nearest Thine
Comes that of woman, with the one we love
Pre-eminent. Who that knoweth the Divine
Could serve another, even so 'twould prove
Hopeless to worship at a second shrine
If Soul burned truly for the first above !

CXLIX.

Once, and once only ; once in all our life.—
The thought that would admit another brings
Against the essential of love imaginings
That are destructive to its bloom, and rife
With vilest passions that may rise in strife
And cloy its sweets, and breathe upon its wings
Till they grow feeble in vain wanderings ;
A second is not Husband, no nor Wife !—
What ! give those names to that which flesh or gold,
On one side or the other, has bought at will,
More warm than love may be or over cold,
With never thought in it but to fulfil
The years as best it may, till, both grown old,
Time brings deliverance from what naught can kill.

CL.

There must be something that the Soul can teach
 Another without words, some subtle sense
 That interfuses all between, and hence
 Makes will know will without the need of speech.
 Ah would the power were mine and I could reach
 The gentle Spirit in thee, to draw thence
 A blessing on mine own, and eloquence,
 That silent eloquence that can beseech
 When lips have lost their language ! O to prove
 The thought I have by sweeter thought from thee !
 To know my love is not in vain, for love
 Is nothing worth unless it mutual be.
 What write I ?—Nay ! Tho hopeless it will move
 Our hearts to higher hope and purity.

CLI.

The human heart is ever hungering
 For love ; it must love or it withers up :
 It is no Tantalus, for if the cup
 Be oft withdrawn it grows a lifeless thing ;
 The moment comes, the timid Bird a-wing
 Waits but an instant for the hand ; one sup
 And lips drink deep or never, and abrup'
 Black cliffs shoot up to thrust you from the spring.
 The World grows darker to the darkened eye
 And sorrow sets its hues on every leaf,
 Past the winds wander ever mournfully
 And breathe with bitter breath on young belief
 In high and holy : Ah, the half stifled sigh
 Of disappointment knows the grayest grief !

CLII.

They cannot love, who think they love again ;
Who think they love, then let the waters quench
The thought with Lethe in besotted drench,
And deem the Soul hath taken on no stain :
Because your dull ears heard no jarring strain
Against the nature of things, and the rough wrench
Touched not the quick of your brute nerves with clenched
Of physical argument and fleshly pain,
You deem no harm done to the higher Soul,
No scar engraven on its substance there ;
You deem that falsehood with its griming coal
Can mark the mind no more than mark the air ;
Wait till the swift years in their onward roll
Hold up to light the thing you are, and were !

CLIII.

There is a littleness in love unless
It lifts us from ourselves, and higher grows
Than earthly passion and the passing shows
Of form or face : 'tis nothing but a dress
That covers o'er awhile the coarser flesh
Of earthly passion, if it only owes
Its birth to these ; the time will come, it knows,
The colour gone and worn to raggedness
Forth all the Leper is exposed, and sees
The filthy thing it is. Satiety
Leads Loathing by the hand and Hate that frees
Itself with one wild bound from every tie.—
Passion may spend itself like tides and seas,
But love, if it be love, can never die.

CLIV.

Love cannot die, except it be to prove
 Its immortality by contempt of this
 Poor world that never here can round its bliss,
 Complete and satisfy, adown one groove
 Spinning forever without force to move
 To right or left or upwards ; and I wis
 A simple death in flesh of hers or his
 Would only gain the sooner gift of love.
 Ah Sweet, 'twere easy die, if thou wert near,
 Thy soft breath on me from thy lips, thy hair
 About my brows, and all the future clear
 With arms of love wide open for me there,
 For, as my Soul went, I have little fear
 'Twould draw thine by the law that made us pair !

CLV.

Not one, but twain created, for one joy ;
 If so created, who should separate,
 Not Death, I trow, the Mate from Chosen Mate,
 The one Girl God made here for the one Boy
 Put here to meet her. Break this and you destroy
 The first thought of a perfect love, that state
 That brooks no rival, and will never wait
 To measure, weigh, and try, and clog, and cloy
 Its sense : it must meet free or not at all,
 Must meet and mix at once or never more.
 Not that the first encounter draws out all
 Its sweetness, for there ever is in store
 Some sweeter sweet behind, but it must fall,
 Strike root and bud at once, or all is o'er.

CLVI.

The thought of thee gives life new earnestness,
And larger light falls on the widening plain ;
I feel my life is not lived out in vain
If it has led to thee, if but thy dress,
Its outward skirt, is all that I can press
To lips that dare not speak, tho they had fain
Have spoken, love allowing ! O to gain
One thought from thee were rapture in distress !
I knew not what it was to love, but when
You burst upon me like the far off light
Of Home upon the weary crew agen
After long hours of toiling thro the night,
I felt what aye has bowed the Souls of men
Thro this world's tale to women's grander might.

CLVII.

There is no thought of mine throughout the day
But in it has some tinge of thought of thee ;
In all the thousand thoughts that fly to me
There is an underthought, that seems to play
Æolian music that can quell alway
The yeasty surges of that cruel sea
That swallows up man's senses, when they flee
Aghast its swelling waves and have no stay
Beyond themselves ! Thou art my Star and Guide,
• My Hope, my Crown, my Comfort and my
Friend !
All earthly will by thee is crucified,
My earth robes with thy Heavenly raiment blend :
Mayhap thou ne'er wilt be my earthly Bride,
But Soul claims and will have thee in the end.

CLVIII.

Sweet Parent of all sweetness that is mine,
 What ever in me is not rough or rude
 I owe thy influence ! All that is not good
 Thy goodness gives me to subdue, and shrine
 Far down with buried self ! O Diamond Mine
 Of thought, wherefrom I in my solitude
 Can draw a thousand gems, and pleasant food
 Of recollection fond of thee and thine !
 My own ! My own ! We love to hedge around
 One little plot in all this world's wide sphere,
 And feel it is our own, and Holy ground
 That no man else can ever draw anear.
 What ! Can such selfishness in love be found ?
 Ah, Love himself acquits you ! Have no fear !—

CLIX.

All day the rain has pattered past the panes ;
 Still the low leaden sky with heavy lid
 Sleeps on, and wearily the hours have slid
 From dawn to darkness, for with silent vanes
 Eve, owl-like, sweeps across the dripping plains
 Bearing the twilight on her breast, and hid
 Behind with coming night ; which, over-rid
 With sense of sorrow for the dead day's pains,
 Sleeps on in sullen silence thro the hours
 That creep off slowly from Time's dial plate,
 Then, shivering at the sound of gusty showers,
 Watches the young-eyed Stars with almost hate,
 Who seem to whisper to the folded flowers,
 He comes, a little wait, a little wait !—

CLX.

A faint flush to the East that broadens high
But dies again in darkness : then more still
Grows all the world, and watches hard until
Again the growing line of brighter sky
Wins steady up, where, rising gloriously
Full of his purpose that he must fulfil,
And leaping on from hill to higher hill,
Springs the grand Sun in golden panoply
Over the waiting waters : and all things
Burst into soulfelt song, and far away
The shades fly West with weary wasted wings,
Forced from their empire as the god of day
Strides stately on ; and merry morning flings
The sea-mists off from cape and beaten bay.

CLXI.

My day hath been all sterile, single, sour,
My night hath been all long, and dark, and sad ;
But now new crimson morning rises glad,
And now the cloudy wracks, that seemed to lower
Above my mountains, lift, some higher Power,
Some Cause compels ; whence else were it they had
Those golden finger touches, tho, grown mad
To yield without a struggle, for an hour
The ragged storm swept back, and here and there
Grey clouds like northern wild-geese overhead
Shot o'er the vast, and almost made the air
Sing to the whistle of their wings that led
And captained in the gusty squalls :—but fair
New morning breaks, the mist will soon be fled !

G

CLXII.

The faint pale pink of young Spring's almond trees
 Begin to blush about our Squares, and fill
 This great grim City with new hope, until,
 Thro' sense of nearing Summer, the green leas
 And murmuring streams and rippled pools one sees
 Won from the gripe of Winter; yet but chill
 The welcome early March of wayward will
 Gives to the tender blooms with biting breeze.
 The blushing boughs pale out this afternoon,
 As live and die along cheek, throat, and chin,
 Faint flushes, when some Beauty, come too soon,
 Feels all the empty Halls stare on her in
 Her loneliness, her fair face out of tune
 With time still tardy of the jocund din.

CLXIII.

Spring lays his warm hand on the breast of Snow,
 And lays his lips upon her lips of ice
 Grown ruddy from his kisses, tho' the price
 She pays him for his love is death below
 His wings and warm embraces, as they go
 Touching her off with many a soft device
 From eave, and ridge, and lattice, to entice
 The young flowers out and bid the blossoms blow.
 The Willow puts a still gloved finger out,
 Her fury catkins try the air to test
 Spring's true approach; the budding Lindens pout
 In ruby at each shoot's tip, ere the rest
 Dare break in smiles and leaves; and all about
 The Birds uncertain greet the wooing West!

CLXIV.

So, Love, at first comes love to all of us !—
Just trembling out into the frosty air,
Then shrinking back again to find that there
It has no fellow : then returning thus
It once more fills with blossoms marvellous
The hopeful heart, while scarce the cheek would dare
To tell in pink its tale, so like despair
That it grows wan and white and tremulous.
He is too fearful that himself should strive ;
Touch but the faint flowers and they will awake,
And lay them to thy bosom to revive,
If but for pity of pale Love's own sake ;
So easy killed, so hard to bring alive.—
Ah Love, and hast thou no reply to make ?

CLXV.

It hurteth Love that he is answered not.—
For so one day across the happy meads
He wandered free, and brushed the morning beads
From the lush grass or ere the Sun grew hot ;
Till happening careless on a fairy spot,
In a bright flowerbell by the bending reeds
He saw a Bee about his sugary needs
Searching the petals, and, his sting forgot,
Said “ Rest thee Brother, and my Playmate be ! ”
But never heed the busy insect gave.
Whereat the little Love-god angrily
Stretched out his hand and seized it, over brave,
But pierced sore cried out “ Ah, woe is me ! ”
Then may not luckless Love your pity crave.—

CLXVI.

Ah yes, you give it, hope must ever wake
 At least a pity if not love itself !—
 So tender Pity sighing near the Elf,
 Not so asleep but that his dream may break
 Sad from her sighing, doth new comfort take
 To see his eyelids quiver and their pelf,
 Their hidden pelf of blue unsheathe, no delf
 Or mine hides deeper sapphire to unmake
 The heart of her that trembles neath his eyes,
 Like Psyche when she waked him ere he fled
 And left her fainting from the sweet surprise,
 And longing,—if only then to strike her dead
 Her Love's return,—with scarce the strength for sighs,
 Dazed with the glories of his golden head.

CLXVII.

Are not her Story and her wanderings
 On all men's lips ? Who loses Love must then
 Needs travel far to gain him back agen
 And feel once more the fanning of his wings,
 And feel his lips that tell delicious things
 Close to the cheek, whose warm blood answers, when
 The ear of Women to the speech of Men
 Is tuned to catch the honeyed whisperings.—
 Said they not so of Psyche, who has past,
 Tho still the Story of her love remains :—
 But my love burns up higher, and will last
 Longer than any bound by earthly chains
 Of face or flesh ; accept the offering, cast
 Before thy feet, with more than Psyche's gains !

CLXVIII.

When looking on the skies we only see
In those bright seas a dazzling swirl of Suns ;—
Perchance we choose one out, and our Soul runs
Drawn to it strangely, for our home must be
Then aye or nowhere ; flying thither passionately
We but behold the light nought dims or duns,
Till, come within its power, the lesser ones,
Its circling Moons and Spheres, all in degree
Attuned to make its brightness brighter yet,
Its fairness fairer with more tender grace :
So first we love, and passion sees not set
Around its Star those moods of gentler race :
I knew not, Love, each dewy violet
When far away I saw and loved your face.

CLXIX.

I know there is a guiding hand in love
That leads together Man and Maid to meet.—
The chosen Man, the chosen Maid, to greet
Together that pure light that from above
Shines on their faces, and would disapprove
The baubles of the World and hurl defeat
And scorn on earthly vileness, to complete
And round and to perfection bring the move
That first scarce dared to tremble in the thought,
Felt whisper to itself were over bold :
Whence, whence the whisper if it were not taught,—
The guidance here without a hand to hold :—
'Tis no false dawn ; the early hills have caught
The rising Sun, change cliff and crag to gold !

CLXX.

On Earth 'tis love to worship what is fair,
 Then all fair things, till, brought to wider view,
 We worship what soever is good to do,
 And show forth this new love in practice there :
 Till every thought of all pure ideas have share
 In growing love and reverence, at last their new
 Love leads us up to Him from whom they grew,
 And this is love and God : for never pair
 Met here to truly love but worshipped God,
 And gave back doubled what He gave them first.
 Not he, who laid in napkin and neath sod
 His talent, got reward, but he who erst
 Bound labour on as sandals, and so shod
 Found blessing in what was afore time cursed.

CLXXI.

Love shakes the seeds of indolence from his lap
 And rises girt for labour.—Love makes strong
 The feeble knees and loins, and cheers with song
 That gilds the flying hours with future hap
 Of joy from toil unselfish ; against the gap
 And breach of circumstance he leads along
 His forces to victorious issue, wrong
 In vain opposing, vainly fate doth sap
 And mine his overthrow : like early rains
 While yet the year is young in Southern lands,
 He leaps upon each little stay, that strains
 Its feeble strength against his mighty hands,
 And clears the channel life, till o'er the plains
 The tide success, still, strong, and deeply stands.

CLXXII.

Duty and service grow to love at last,
For love is absolute unselfishness,
And service purged of gain grows into this
Nor hopes reward for labour overpast,
Simply the right to labour, and to cast
The flowers and fruit before Love's feet and kiss
The fringes of the garment, that, I wis,
Sweeps clear the paths of life that blossom fast
And break in bloom beneath them : pure to pure
Must spring, not passion driven like the Deer,
The Cattle, and all the life that can endure
Only while this life lasts, but with the clear
White light of Heaven, a dazzling encolure,
Shining from thence to ring their union here.

CLXXIII.

Whether the Beast two-footed walk upright,
Or whether it nearer ground four-footed goes,
It cannot drown itself in the overflows
Of pure unselfish love, and lose all sight
Of self with eyes strained only for that height
Where hangs and bleeds Supreme Love. Who knows
The glorious world that round him is and grows
But he who, casting self with all his might
Beneath his feet, treads out with absolute
Strong will mere earth and passion's shortlived wine!
He must abolish and burn out the brute
In him before great Nature's holiest shrine,
Till heart of flesh and Soul within are mute
Together in the presence of the Divine !

CLXXIV.

For Love, if Love be Love, is not of Earth.—
 Even the fabled Deity of old
 Sprung up celestial with his wings of gold,
 Pure only, guardian of the home and hearth,
 Where others, almost all, grown vile made mirth
 In villainy and passion uncontrolled ;
 And many a Gem and Cameo have told
 The one pure Classic legend : and his birth
 Today perchance lifts many a creature higher,
 To see a height that was hereto unseen,
 And set his heart to win this new desire,
 Till, with the brand that had afore time been
 Borne by the Seraph from the central fire,
 Love touches his lips, and, lo, his lips are clean !—

CLXXV.

As Season leaps to Season, Star to Star,
 And instant mixes and is one, as light
 Thrown thro two crystals instant doth unite
 The quivering colours, as the moments mar
 Or make our lives, so too the near and far,
 My near of sorrow, your far of delight,
 Must draw to each and mingle, tho too bright
 And dazzling for man's eyes those moments are.—
 Assent is naught if it come sluggishly ;
 The wish and will and thought must celebrate
 The act together, must pass hence tremblingly
 If not fulfilled, not linger and debate.—
 Love must meet Love, and open-hearted fly
 As first Spring's Swallow to her nesting Mate.

CLXXVI.

If lips, if lips alone were eloquent,—
If love were only told upon the tongue,—
If only in the words of Singers sung
Poor Love had utterance, how were he beshent
Of half his glory ! Little the event
If thought and eyes and life and actions flung
No weight into the balance, if there clung
No thousand memories round the way he went !
So too in life ; if only of what he said
This World kept record here, the good man's path
Would lose its many a tender flower bespread
About the way he wandered glen and garth ;
Would show but as a fire burnt out and dead,
A track traced thro the ashes on the hearth.—

CLXXVII.

Did I not feel my own unworthiness
I would not dare to offer you my love ;—
Did I not feel that every Star above
Shone purer, brighter, with more unworldliness,
Than the best thought within me, how address
My thoughts to Heaven and those bright Spheres that
move
In worship overhead !—I cannot prove
As Knight of old in Tourney's moil or stress
That I would face a thousand Fates for thee ;
But, ah, believe me, in this World of ours,
Altho we meet not face to face and knee
To knee in battle shock, far fiercer Powers
Stride silent by, and stab more bitterly
Than any Foemen of those antique hours !—

CLXXVIII.

The World is Love's Republic ! High and low,
 The Cottage and the Castle, hill and vale
 Yield him their homage, and the gentle tale
 Is told in every tongue this world doth know
 By those who henceforth none allegiance owe
 But that they swear before the lifted veil
 Of his rose altar, crabbed Folk assail
 With hopeless croak and curse to overthrow.—
 But roses reddens round it every Spring,
 Red roses and white lilies, and for aye
 While this world lasts, the gracious garlanding
 Will hide all sorrows out, and far away
 Each pearly morning that the new Suns bring
 Makes for the god a gracious rose of day !—

CLXXIX.

As one, when the light wind among the trees
 Is stilled, looks into the dark pool below
 And sees therein his form and features grow
 From trembling shapelessness to shape, he sees
 Perchance in some dark Lady's eyes, the breeze
 Of laughter leaves all liquid and aglow
 With deeper sense, his shape as long ago
 He saw it in the deep pool's silences.
 His shape is in her eyes, and pool and pool
 Would meet and mix—a rustle in the grass,
 And whirling the dry leaves round bole and stool
 Of Elm and Oak, the wind makes dim the glass
 Of the Mere's water—so the cruel school
 Of Life has many a ruffling breeze, alas !—

CLXXX.

Sitting before this table world of things,
As one that sits and cuts a Cameo,
And sees the feathers and the features grow
Under his fingers, and the plumpy wings
Float out from Cupid's shoulders, and the strings
That bind his quiver and make bent his bow,
And all the waves of his locks' overflow
About his neck in dainty wanderings,
I saw upon the Sard, my heart, uprise
The soft design, and then myself effaced
By the diamond dust of love, before my eyes
Neath the translucent globe of water, placed
The common light on it to crystallize.—
And last thyself in perfect image traced.

CLXXXI.

We have but one Mate in the World to greet ;
One other half to make, fulfil our own ;
In every life of perfect human tone
Two perfect human Lives distinct must meet,
From that far first created strong and sweet ;
Divisible, indivisible ; two and one ;
Fashioned for all, yet each for each alone ;
Perfect, yet only when made one, complete :
The bow, the cord ; the word, the note of praise ;
Two arrows winging to one common goal ;
Alike, unlike ; of same, yet different ways ;
One flesh, yet other flesh ; of common Soul ;
To meet, grow one, and at the end of days
Give back their Maker His completed whole.—

CLXXXII.

Manhood is full of meaning, not alone
 That years have fruited, but that time is here
 When one can look and read with judgment clear
 The Present, that before went whirling on
 As clouds are shifted fore or back, whereon
 Blow any breezes lightly ; now more near
 To the great finish fall upon the ear
 The workings of the Future, and things gone
 Take their true rank and order to his view,
 As Man finds freedom and the fateful choice ;
 And straight, as all attainment broadens thro,
 His ears and heart are opened to rejoice,
 Like waking Samuel when he hitherto
 Had heard but only deemed it Eli's voice !

CLXXXIII.

It opens on us wider like the West,
 As dawn grows more in daylight, widens forth ;
 And, further stretching South and East and North,
 Our eyes look out beyond the happy nest
 Where all was love, dependence, joy, and breast
 Of tender Mother twixt us and the wrath
 Of any tempest : but the bitter broth
 Of new experience brewed by the Witch Unrest
 Makes sharp and thin our lips and sad and sour,
 For every young Bird here must leave his Home ;
 Yet else how sing and know his proper power,
 How try his wings against the Eternal Dome
 Blue over head, and meet that splendid hour
 That sets no bounds to where the Soul may roam.

CLXXXIV.

The Past is a still sea from which we break
Like waves upon the shore, our present land ;—
We cast upon it all the grains of sand
Our small experiences, each little ache
And warning stay forgot, and we would take
And bear on in their stead huge rocks, and stand
Deep fathoms o'er them proudly : a command
Is given, so far, no further, ye may make.—
We still an instant, then roll wearily
Down the slope shallows, but return again
To mount once more : even as the waters we
Strive fiercely on nor ever can refrain,
And find we leave our Boyhood's Summer sea
Only to learn the words, in vain, in vain !

CLXXXV.

Man's life is as the life of some great Tree :—
Each individual is a leaf that owes
Service of good unto the branch that grows
And gives its separate oneness strength to be.
'Tis fed from the fountains of Eternity,
Tho ageing to a death it feels and knows ;
It sees the land o'er which its shadow goes
Swallowed up ever by a nearing sea.
Its bark the crust of custom, this and this
Has been and therefore must be, till the sound
Of thunder rends it and none feel the miss ;
Its roots the buried ages spread around,
That, tho the source of life to all that is,
Lie still enough and silent in the ground.

CLXXXVI.

Custom is cruel, bitter cruel here,
 And often more a murderer than Cain ;
 How many a noble heart has striven in vain
 To fall back baffled, broken, with the clear
 Shrill cry of blood going up to Heaven, as year
 On year scores deeper on the world the stain,
 The mark of murderer ; but the thirsty plain
 Drinks the red stream and splendid doth appear
 In green and gold, and Summer-garmented
 Hides out the horror, and the hedges sing
 With pipe of birds, and flowers of scented head
 Strew all the sappy straths with sweet and Spring ;
 Till the time comes when the unnumbered Dead
 Shall fill the fallow fields for harvesting.

CLXXXVII.

Almost would we, compelled by force of things,
 Believe in lesser gods who rule us ; high
 Indeed, but of more narrow nobility
 Than those whose ears are laid against the strings
 That run from Man's heart up to Heaven, whose wings
 Are ready for protection or reply
 And swift communion.—O'er the agony
 Of grim wounds dealt and harness fierce that rings,
 See the Eternal Fates with calm clear eyes
 Watching the dust rise, and the shifted straw,
 Watching us from the great blue galleries
 Where peak on peak the mountains rise before,
 The same for him who conquers or who dies,
 Deathless, unchanged, unchanging evermore !—

CLXXXVIII.

Not so!—No Potter flings upon the wheel
The clay, and, blinder than the thing he makes
Spins sightless out the formless mass that takes
Its myriad shapes about us, and would steal
Our eyes from nature.—No, this life's appeal
Is from the field to life beyond the aches,
And bitter ash no cooling crystal slakes.—
One ever waiting stands with ears that feel
Man's slightest heart-throb fall in perfect rhyme,
And listening for the feet that scarcely raise
A listless echo in the long Halls of Time
With scarce the sound of quiet kine that graze,
No less than for the Soul that soars sublime
To meet its Master after many days —

CLXXXIX.

Oft in the crowded street or festival,
Or in the busy marts of toil and men,
Has a still crept upon me, and again
Have shadows of the evening seemed to fall
Across the sea-beach from the Palm trees tall,
Until the crabs crept out to forage when
The great black Bats flew by, and then—and then—
The vision passed and men once more grew all.—
So oft in some sweet eve of early Spring's
Wandering those precious Acres, tho no Larks
Tremble in song above, no Linnet sings,
The soul is lost in God and nothing marks
Of man, till sudden gainst our senses swings
The roaring surf that surges round our Parks !

CXC.

So too with Song : it swims in on the sense
 And drowns the World out for a moment here,
 As fall forgotten voices on our ear
 And tell us of the Past, and recompense
 Bring for the Present ; lifting our hearts hence
 To breathe of some diviner atmosphere,
 With purer lights and larger, and more near
 To God : without a shadow or defence
 Betwixt our Soul and His from whom it came ;
 Fearless, because, in answer to His voice,
 Our hearts have dared draw nigh His living flame,
 Without a thought or hope but to rejoice,
 As stands a child and thrills to hear its name
 Called by a Father from its play and toys.

CXCI.

The life within him leads the Man to song :—
 As the tree boughs are played on by the wind
 So are the myriad branches of his mind,
 With all the leaves that unto them belong,
 And fruits and sprays, so shaken, that they long
 The coming breeze, and for the coming find
 A fitting music, which has aye behind
 A hidden hopelessness, tho' lips be strong,
 Cut clear, and for the world together pressed
 To sing out boldly and without a shake.
 Ah, all its hope is for that Land addressed
 Invisible, whence the wind comes, to unmake
 With wild desire the heart, and try and test
 To nothingness earth's Idols, and to break !

CXCII.

Indeed, indeed, 'tis not for gain or gaud
Of any gilt, true Singer sings his strain.—
For if around him lay the even main
He only on the Island, and the ford
Knew but his crossing, and the river roared
It fulness only past his feet, and vain
The morning Sun searched leafy glade and plain
For any fellow, yet, as evening poured
Its lavish gold upon him, and the Moon
Flung silver to his feet with open hand,
His heart would open and respond in tune
To that soft voice that goes up from the land,
Heard thro some sleepy Southern afternoon
Beside the Falls that grow more sweet than grand.

CXCIII.

The *trade* of verses—Good ! It hath its sign
As other trades have, whereby they are found,
It hath its Unions and its Members bound
To mutual help and fellowship ; yet their line
Has gone out far against them and they pine ;
The ivy of their folly wraps them round,
Sucks out their life and drags them to the ground,
The Earth needs offal, garbage for its Swine !
Without one touch of nobler Manhood, lorn,
Effeminate, lacking self-respect, unkempt,
A libel on their Maker, bastard born,
They from our note or censure are exempt,
Who sit too low for spitting and for scorn
That cannot scorn the thing beneath contempt.

CXCIV.

It must be life, not labour, and must lift
 All littleness at last to greatness here,
 Keep the heart large and Manhood pure and clear,
 Or 'tis not Heaven that bestowed the gift.—
 No hot-house Summer seeks it, making shift
 With odours so the sickly atmosphere
 To fill, and with strange shapes the eyes to blear
 That they grow blind to Nature, and, adrift
 In lumpy waves where some great City pours
 Its filth into the sea, souse in the scum,
 Striking out from Life's young and earnest shores.—
 If it blaze out in Boyhood and become
 Dead ashes in the Man, from other stores
 It steals its music or perforce is dumb.

CXCV.

Urania seeks not such ! Her worshippers,
 Because in them the Boy does aye endure,
 With all of Boyhood, high, and true, and pure,
 Draw thence their claim to be indeed of hers.—
 He only, who with Milton's voice avers
 “ Deum hic rursus testem ” ²¹—and is sure
 No finger in the World can point the lure
 That led him from her, fears no thought that stirs
 Against himself to unself himself and write :
 Who holds her garment only by the hem,
 Her outmost hem, will aye be true, despite
 His human littleness, and none condemn
 The faintest Star that glimmers thro the night
 Because surpassed by many a brighter gem.

CXCVI.

One cannot undertake that he increase
 The effort of his life ; but if I live,
 I further promise I will further give
All of that life to labour for the peace
Which comes with the long years and the decrease
 Of weeks spent in thy worship. O forgive,
 Spirit of Harmony, the fugitive
Faint efforts my life gives thee, when I cease
 And see my life how little ; yet would break
 From rushing ranks awhile to worship thee :
Taught by that worship from my dream I wake
 To look beyond to who fashioned thee and me :—
God, when our life is all summed up we make
 How small a wave upon how vast a sea !

CXCVII.

Great Sons of Song whose morning music made
 Each a new Sunrise o'er a darkened Earth,
 As early dawns in Summer spring to birth
Wide o'er a World waiting and over-laid
 With beams and bars of glory, ye the staid
 Grown gray and weary times, starved with the dearth
 Of mellow music, lighted up to mirth
And touched men's hearts and hopes, until they played
 In unison with shores and streams and seas
 The eternal music of natural hope, that runs
Thro all of Nature, from the whispering trees
 And half articulate lips of Little-ones,
 Alike from Poets' hearts and on the breeze
 And thro the song of chiming Stars and Suns.

CXCVIII.

Early and late our Singers are the same
 But with some point of difference, not distinct
 With touches here and there of common tinct,
 But almost only differing in name :
 For Nature picks out fellows, sets her claim
 On like and like, whose larger Souls are linked
 With more of Manhood's gold than is instinct
 About the crowds of daily praise or blame :
 And, having this abundance, they dispense
 So royally their bounty that none knows
 Himself recipient, seeing he sees not whence
 His wealth is gotten, a grace that ever grows ;
 God's greatest gift to Man, heart eloquence
 That to the heart of all created goes.

CXCIX.

Chaucer, true Son of English soil, for all
 The merry foreign movement of your mouth,
 You heard the rebeck twanging in the South
 Nor held contemptuous from the festival :
 Just mirth and music, and a touch withal,
 A touch scarce felt, of sadness for the drouth
 Left after draughts of pleasure, seeing Youth
 Is not the happy thing it looks at all.—
 Sweet Singer, round whose page the clear and crisp
 Hoar-crested grass springs up with flowers o'erhung,
 And full of Folk that reap and bind the wisp,
 And Folk that fought and taught and prayed and
 sung ;
 Most gentle Knight of Song, he “ needs no lisp
 To make his English sweet upon the tongue.”

CC.

Shakespeare, the World is thine by simple right
Of conquest, wherefore then what word can I
Afford to gild thy immortality,—
What moonbeam throw upon the central might!—
Thou that didst flesh and blood and thought unite,
Folk-father, a whole People spring from thee
And make thy name thro all time that shall be
A Wonder, and a World, and a Delight.—
Who shall define thy place, for every one
Beholds himself glassed back in thee, and hears
The ripple of the Springs of life that run
About thy lips, that opened for all years,
And sent thy song forth singing to the Sun
And making music with the morning Spheres.

CCI.

Milton, whenever I take up what thou
Hast written, I behold a larger mind
Than Men have got today ; tho thou wert blind
Thou wrotest neath greater light than we write now.—
God's Poet,—His veil invisible, I trow,
Darkened thine eyes, lest they should see and find
The Angel standing ever close behind,
And holy fear compel thee disallow
Free thought : yet not less has His Presence been
About thee that thy sense of sight was gone,
For that same Power of Majesty serene
Guided thy soaring Soul unconscious on,
As once with other force, felt but unseen,
Wrote “Mene” on the walls of Babylon !

CCII.

O Scottish Burns ! Not so much great as true,
 And truth is more than greatness in our songs ;
 Wherefore to thee a Nation's love belongs,
 A Nation's homage, for they turn to you
 Seeing in your life the truth comes burning thro
 Spite of the slips and stumbles, and one longs
 And yearns towards the man and Brother's wrongs
 And rights, may be we fail and feel them too.—
 Scotland, thy noblest names were base, the hut
 And stedding from a sterner stock out-turns
 Thy true nobility ; Justice cannot shut
 From sight the glory Fame her favoured earns,
 They have our worship for their greatness, but
 You have a People's hearts, O Scottish Burns !

CCIII.

Shelley, of Spirits sweetest, opaline
 To catch the every gleam and light and glance
 Of Nature's eyes : across whose numbers dance
 The fingers of the Spirit of song divine,
 Maiden most musical and mate of thine.—
 Thy thought was as the Sun that shoots a lance
 Of light to brighten, gild, and to enhance
 All that it tries or touches, but that mine
 No sunbeams pierce, thou piercedst, and the mass
 Of doubt and darkness cleft that thou mightest
 see :
 Has this thought's fulness with thee come to 'pass,
 Wiping the tears from that worn face of thee !
 “ Life, like a Dome of many coloured glass,
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity.”

CCIV.

Ah Keats, the Poet's World is all too soft
To run against the ruder World of men,
And none who love would have thee here agen
Whose Presence hangs about them still ; for oft
By whispering wood and thimy-scented croft
Thy memory bubbles up like music, when
The bells blown tinkling from the woolly pen
At evening call the first Star up aloft.—
Thy dust may be, thou art not in the grave,
And Death is no destroyer who completes
And rounds thy fame and story ; he who drove
The dart once more showed forth his oft
defeats.—
Happy to die as thou didst, young, and have
The whole world sighing for thy stay, O Keats !

CCV.

Wordsworth, thy unknown pages yet present,
Save for the rambles of my childish moods,
Their secret stretch of travel, leagues and roods
Before me lying, like some dim continent
Seen thro the hazes of new day, and blent
With morning mist ; while from the far off woods,
And toilsome brakes, and weary solitudes,
Come promises that for the labour spent
Will be repayment : thou must live, for thou
Wrote Nature down, and all that write her must
With each renewing season in leaf and bough
And flower and petal be renewed, her trust ;
Only his bays, who is her Priest, I trow,
Live on nor crumble with man's crumbling dust !

CCVI.

Our heritage of Song is not the thing
 That some would make it, 'tis more truly true
 Ourselves than that self shown to outward view
 In this great world, where, with o'er shadowing wing,
 Fashion or custom chokes down those who sing,
 Save in that singing's self, wherein burns thro
 The real man behind the flesh, so few
 Have power to break from. Song must ever bring,
 Be it but true, us nearer to that truth
 That is the soul of all things ; we belong
 Not to ourselves when wedded, but, forsooth,
 To her for whom all Nature says, Be strong ;
 If thou desertest the wife of thy youth
 For other Loves, who shall receive thy song ?

CCVII.

It is not idly to be taken up, and flung
 As idly down ; it is not just to pass
 A Summer's day beside the glittering glass
 Of some lake crystal, where the trees are swung
 Lazily by the lazy breeze, and wrung
 The delicate bells and petals o'er the grass,
 That shakes its spearheads where the shadows mass
 Together neathe the branches overhung
 And hiding out the sunlight ; 'tis not meet
 It should be taken up for idle needs,
 And flung again beneath the careless feet
 Of careless men and careless prancing steeds ;
 A moment tasted, for a moment sweet,
 Then cast ashore as ocean casts her weeds.

CCVIII.

Love is too lyric, burning thro and thro
And ever burning, to be called our life ;
Wedded to verse the sacred name of wife
Were better, yet that sounds o'er selfish too,
For 'tis not rounded by a wall from view
Of the World in all its depths, but in the strife
It stands by like a Friend, and it is rife
With all of friendship, open, bold, and true,
Both high and humble, hiding and showing all ;
And, truly Heaven descended and inspired,
It comes as friendship, answers to the call
Of Soul to its Soul, and, when around the mired
Dull march of life would swallow up who fall,
Leads us as children here grown over tired.

CCIX.

Because we met, and meeting once sufficed
To join our hands so fast that none can part,
Because heart answered selfsame words to heart
A look hath joined what earth hath never priced.
'Twas not because the roving eye enticed
The rover eye, that searched a worldly mart
For foolish gauds or pleasure, and did start
Eager to meet a Mate marked o'er and diced
With the same pattern, motley black and white :—
'Twas not because of aught they buy and sell
Where few have not their price, but that, despite
The closing ferns and fronds, we saw the well
Of friendship's waters sparkling to the light,
Dim-deep and crystal-pure, ineffable !

CCX.

That was enough for thee, enough for Song
 Tho earlier born and brought to knowledge here ;

'Tis not alone to seed of childish year
 That all ripe fruits and richest blooms belong.

That azure river as it rolls along
 Takes many a Bather from its banks when near

The swallowing Sea, and many when the clear
 First fountain heads it left and scarce yet strong.

Thank God for Friends !—In life's fierce fever heat

The cooling angel kiss upon our brows :—

The lamp in darkness to guide straight our feet :—

The light behind the lattice in the house

Streaming across the moorland mists, to meet

The Wanderer tired for tardy Dawn's arouse.—

CCXI.

True friendship, more than friendship, gave again
 My bartered health : and what was I to you

That ye should raise me up, O well loved Two,
 I know not, but my life is lived in vain

Until I thank you for that life made plain

Once more, and fair and pleasant ! O the blue

Pure azure infinite whence comes burning thro

The whole love of a young man's heart ! No main

From deeper depths draws up a purer pearl

Than this my Soul would offer ; for I wis

No love of ruddy lip or witching curl

But in it has some tinge of selfishness.

I almost feel the love of Boy for Girl

Is little when compared with love like this !

CCXII.

It is not Friendship, Friendship fades and dies :
 This will not.—Tho you slay me I would love !—
 The Old World yet is young, I feel it move
Within me whispering, as the fountains rise
Beneath, and fill my heart from source that lies
 So deep that few have sent down from above
 The long walled well, and drawn to taste and prove
Their sweetness in the desert sand that flies
 In clouds about the World ! Ah, far between
 And few the Palm-trees rising o'er the waste,
The sands are wider than the emrald green
 Of gentle meads, and they must needs be faced,
Till fallen weary, to our lips unseen
 An Angel holds the cup and whispers, Taste !

CCXIII.

I have drunk long and deeply, and his wings
 Fan the faint airs into a cooling breeze
 That bathes my brow ; with strengthened steps, and
knees
Made strong to face what further future brings
Of march or toil, my Soul leaps up, and springs
 Strong once again against what foe he sees
 In the fierce struggle of life, till neath the trees
Victor at evening cool himself he flings.—
 The Angels that come down are two, one draws
 Equal to equal, but the other one
 Lesser to greater, till along the shores
 Of life the reverent footsteps following run :
Yea, greater is the love that overawes [Sun.
 Than that struck out from bright Sun matched with

CCXIV.

Friendship is more than mortal, one would say ;
 Alas, alas, that Spirit at its birth
 Is only half of Heaven and half of Earth,
 Like all of us, a Soul inset in clay
 That sometimes rises, sometimes falls away,
 Strives hard for filling when it feels a dearth,
 Then tosses hearts aside in careless mirth !
 And often, thinking only for the day,
 Loses its best, its noblest, when some Friend
 Thinks not with it, gives counsel bold and true,
 Cares not to flatter, or his being unbend
 From deeplaid truths the long years burning thro.—
 Ah, vain regrets it has that in the end
 Darken life's peaceful sunset evening view !

CCXV.

But tho the Body be of clay, the Soul
 Is in it still, and there it burns in spite
 Of all the heavy glooms of earthly night
 Cast on its clearness ; far the vapours roll,
 And, thro the rifts, we see the perfect pole
 That draws us to it. So the larger Right
 Of Nation's stands ; not the mere law of Might
 Breaking the weaker ; but, bent to the goal
 Of trust twixt each and each, a Something makes
 For truth and that whole heart that truth lifts high.
 Bright eyed, refreshed, a dreaming world awakes
 In this glad promised peace now drawing nigh,
 Save for that lying Power who swears and breaks
 Her bond before the very ink is dry ! ²²

CCXVI.

Look out on that North-nursed despotic Will
Whose force is fraud, whose lips are full of lies,
Half-Eastern, working out its destinies.
O cruel sight beheld of Europe still,
A People driven to be slain or to kill;
On nations round a noble Nation cries,
“ Peace, give us peace ; victim on victim dies,
We see the Free and Freemen’s parts would fill ! ”
O after-birth of eighteen hundred years,
What knowest thou of treaty or of truth !
Despotic Power enthroned on blood and tears,
Born younger than thy Brethren, yet, forsooth,
Wouldst tower, Barbarian, o’er thy more than Peers,
Empire that still art in thy savage youth !

CCXVII.

Thou that art urging swiftly, surely, on
The strife of Races, seest thou no protest
In those attempts which now are laid to rest ;—
False Peace ! Within a very Phlegithon
Burns thro thy Cities, and the hearts whereon
Iron and cold have left their seal impressed.
We are not blind, we People of the West !—
Thy Foe, Free-speech, hath to all corners blown
Thy closet secrets ; cast the old away,
Fond policy, and let our Nations cease
Their Cougar-crouch ; and meet, and trade, and pay
Old hate in love ; thy fettered Press release ;
Fling wide thy Prisons to the rising day ;
Walk thou among thy People and have peace !

CCXVIII.

The Evening brings the News : the Morning wrote^{us}
 The danger down : the Evening sees it done.—
 Now triumphs Evil counsel, it hath won
 A Victory worthless winning : better Smote
 Than Smiter : better bloody hands at throat
 Than blood upon your hands : no reign begun
 In blood can rise and make the perfect Sun
 Of Morning Liberty. You will devote
 Yourselves to bear the curse of them that reign,
 Yourselves grown bloodier than the thing you fight,
 Staining your hands as they that rule you stain :
 Those specious follies, seeming good to sight,
 Conceived in evil, are brought forth in vain ;
 No wrong committed ever works to right.

CCXIX.

You have thrown back your cause throughout the world
 Into its infancy of ball and knife ;
 The Nations look upon you ripe and rife
 For other outrage : four-fold closer curled
 Serpent repression folds you : force is hurled
 Full on the offered chance : this civil strife
 Gives seeming justice to the banished life,
 From all hearts love and cherish rudely whirled.—
 To him who spotless Freedom only loves
 Unsullied, wise, your Cause will always wear
 This shame upon her standards as she moves
 Downward the course of change. A Future fair
 May rise before her, but the Past reproves,
 Pointing the crime no tears can wash out there !

CCXX.

O sacred cause of Freedom, mourn and weep
That Freedom here was vilely overthrown !
What, that poor shattered body you have blown
And mangled out of life, a vengeance deep
For wrongs that grind a Nation ! You that sleep,
Blind Leaders, wake, such passion foul disown,
See that among the meanest it be known,
Your curse, your cause's curse, is on who steep
Their hands in civil slaughter ! O your eyes
Would read the crown wrong and destroy the Heir,
Unhappy born to Evil Destinies,
Leaving the burden he has striven to share
And lessen ! Think you in that Palace lies
A lifeless Tyrant ? Nay, not there, not there !

CCXXI.

The Present pays for faults committed past,
Do you then spare the Future. O be strong
To wait, and bear, and keep your hands from wrong,
Then must your cause triumphant at the last
Lay iron on the necks of those that cast
Today beneath their feet and tread, that long
Have trodden right with exile, cell, and thong.
The strides of Change are great and follow fast ;
Less strength is there in passions fierce that boil
Than in a calm determined hardihood :
With that stern firmness stand thro the turmoil
Unto your cause, and ye will make it good ;
Not by the hidden mine and murderous oil,
But by a will too wide to be withstood.

CCXXII.

“The weeks have wearied over one by one
 And brought us—braid and buttons,²⁴—and our cries
 Choked down with force and bribe and fraud and lies
 That spake reform.—Yea verily, the Son
 Hath called aloud for bread and got a stone.—
 We must uproot before we systemize!—
 Destroy! Destroy!—The Future that supplies
 Us rule can give no worse, and may be won
 To grant us better. Here they play at Kings
 And push us pieces on and off the board :
 Our lives or—uniforms are equal things ;
 And Liberty,—her very name abhorred,
 Has left the Land : what scraps the Censor flings
 Is all the knowledge that ye have abroad !”—

CCXXIII.

I thought to see, from where she lay in chains,
 The form of Freedom rise and walk the Land
 Blue eyed, majestic, while on either hand
 Plenty and peace laughed o'er the laughing plains
 Of her that now weeps weary for the pains
 Of cold and keen oppression, and the band
 That venomous mine and marsh, at Might's command,
 Have swallowed up from life. Might holds the reins,
 Holds in the reins and lashes on the steeds ;
 I see no hope save in the headlong fall
 Of Driven and Driver : for the stream that bleeds
 From one is life blood, and will dry drain all
 That system's sources, but the other leads
 At last to Freedom tho' it first appal !

CCXXIV.

“Surly oppression makes a wise man mad.”—
So wrote the Wisest.—Shall a People be
Burdened and bowed so over bitterly
And lick the hand that lashes and be glad,
While, like the sea, the sobbing of the sad
For loved and lost flows ever fitfully
Throughout the Land?—Shall they not turn and see
Their might grown that of Samson, when he had
The Spirit on him?—As he sought they seek
A Bride,—fair Liberty: on him as he went
A fierce beast roared, they roar who deem you weak;
Needs little of that Spirit to be spent,
And ye may rise with power your terms to speak,
Or rend your Rulers as a Lion rent!

CCXXV.

Bear witness I have bade you wait and bear,
And ye have waited patiently and long;
Yea, very steadfast have ye been, and strong,
And pitiful to look on waiting there:—
Like some dark Woman with dishevelled hair
Prostrate before the gloomy god of wrong
In Eastern Lands, her tearful tendant throng
Weary and hopeless of a sign. Oh fair
Brave country, earnest have I watched thy life;
Prayed thee for patience so to heal thy sores;
For tho ye weighed not where one Will was rife,
And had no part in making of your laws,
I cried, “O break not out in open strife,
Endure, Submit, and ye will gain your cause!”

CCXXVI.

So wrote I, but the Law, God's Law, that stands
 Will have it ; Blood for blood : we ask of thine,
 Of thee and thine, the blood poured out like wine
 In wanton revel.—O those cold thin hands
 Clasped for their country, bound, at the commands
 Of Might unmerciful, to pale and pine
 In sunless snow or poison-breathing mine !
 Is Russian heart so hard it understands
 No tie of Wife or Mother, Child or Friend,
 Had they no feelings, thoughts that kinward roam ?
 Well might ye burst, O hearts that could not bend !—
 The night is dark, but morning light must come :
 Ye sowed the seed, and, lo, in proper end,
 Rejoicing ye will bring the Harvest home !

CCXXVII.

Old Europe slumbered on a smouldering fire
 That on a sudden burst with threatenings
 Against all Lands, and filled the hearts of Kings
 With fear and faintness, and the awful ire
 Of Peoples roused kindled the funeral pyre
 Of trembling Tyranny : but the change of things
 Brought thee no change tho' Europe's, for its wings
 Fell frozen on thy frontiers nor flew higher.—
 Thy Northern fogs filled all the heavy air,
 Thy hand of ice was on the throat of change ;
 But a new Summer thaws the iron there
 And fills the waking heart with impulse strange,
 Its hot blood beating and its eyes a-glare
 For further flight and fiercer onward range.

CCXXVIII.

The Burden of the Desert of the sea ;
The Burden of the Northern plains and pines ;
The echoes twixt the blasting in the mines ;
The voicing of the winds, that wrathfully
Sweep o'er the sullen Steppes, can gainsaid be
No longer : well the bloodless heart divines
That muttering fierce, and closer draws the lines
Of steel and iron round him.—“Unto thee,”
It hisses, “time was given and the force
Of all thy folk behind thee to compel
Thy creatures, and their system to divorce,
To crush the Court, and mid thine own to dwell ;
Thou hast refused and kept the ancient course,
Thy will against the People's : it is well !”

CCXXIX.

The hour is drawing nearer, that must draw
Inevitably down, in whirlpool deeps,
The Power that broken-kneed and wounded creeps,
Like its own Northern Vampires, o'er the Law
And sucks its lifeblood out ; from shore to shore
Sedition stalks, and Revolution leaps
To open end and aim and scarcely keeps
Behind a muslin vesture, to the core
The canker worm of discord eats its way.—
As from the natural course of dark and light
Men prophesy the coming of the day,
So, reading all the gloomy signs aright,
They have no other issue but to say
That furious change must follow on the night.²³

CCXXX.

Then leave her waiting for her doom, that draws
 Down nearer, ever nearer, as a Storm
 Comes up no bigger than a hand, in form
 A hand that larger grows until it pours
 From mighty palm a pelting shower, that roars
 With furious wind about the yet Sun-warm
 But Sun-deserted mountain peaks, deform
 And hazy thro the blinding hail that gores
 Their streaming sides.—So let her wait until
 The death strife stops the present carte and tierce ;
 And who shall say it is for good or ill,
 Until the lightnings of the Future pierce
 The meeting of the clouds that must fulfil
 Itself with tempest and with whirl-wind fierce.

CCXXXI.

Look to ourselves, and see what us affects,
 Proud in our strength, that progress on to-day.—
 Are we a united People, with no play
 Twixt class and class, that jars and disconnects
 The pieces part and part ?—What is it erects
 A solid Nation ? 'Tis no holiday
 Built bower of boughs like later Rome's decay,
 Smoothed up with Bread and Circus that deflects
 The current of independent union to
 The channel of dependence, and goes on
 Till lost in quick-sands, but the balance true
 Held by the Powers of State ; this balance gone,
 One blindly slays, like Samson, who o'erthrew
 The gathered Lords of Gath and Ascalon.

CCXXXII.

God lays great laws down for the Human Race
So deeply graven in our instinct here,
That, tho' filmed o'er and hidden, year by year
Crushed down and contravened, nought can efface
His finger's writing, and in proper place
And His good time, the characters blaze clear
Thro' the burnt rubbish that besmeared : then dear
Doth Mankind pay in danger and disgrace
For hiding God's truths. We have but to look
In the past History of the Universe,
His indisputable Old Testament Book
That the years build up ever verse by verse,
To see, where generations would not brook
His truths, their children surely bore the curse.

CCXXXIII.

Yea, spite of slings and arrows shot, remain
Untouched, unmoved, those ten stern utterances
Given forth in thunder ; guiding life by these
We shall do well, and plough the stormy Main
Of being secure : but then there come again
Not thunder given, but no less His decrees
For wider range than personal life, the keys
That lock in Peace nor to bar woe are vain.
Hear the whole matter whereby harmony
Was once assured : observe how it befel
In later years, and strife by Usury
Was gendered till that Statesman²⁶ crushed it well :
That each man knowing his Home his own and free
Beneath his figtree and his vine should dwell !

CCXXXIV.

O my dear Land, how many born of thee,
 Thy Children, boast a Home? Not theirs by birth,
 They cannot buy it, for the laden earth
 Bears a false value in our Polity,
 Fictitious, giving Place, Position.—See
 The truth clear cut: the soil should scarce be worth
 More than the labour put in it.—O Dearth
 Of strong arms working England! We must free
 It from all burdens, take up and displace
 The causes one by one that do create,
 It seems to me more to our own disgrace,
 A halo round the lords of vast estate.—
 Draws nigh the struggle that we have to face,
 Better that Law, not License, legislate !

CCXXXV.

That Celtic Spawn that sows the Land with strife!—
 Men cry against then: well, and just the cry
 For secret murder and beast cruelty
 Whereat heart sickens and blood boils, the knife
 And scythe and bludgeon, and the darkness rife
 With danger for the guiltless. Vile were I
 Such means an instant here to justify.—
 Yet on the Written Page of that Land's life
 We read the violation of those Laws
 That Time makes blossom into such bitter fruit:
 That planted instinct, bound and baffled, soars,
 And, tho interpreted by worse than Brute
 That fierce and ignorant rends with teeth and claws,
 It has the germs of justice at the root.

CCXXXVI.

Our Burden in the East, that larger Land
That passively endures whate'er the past
Wild waves of conquerors on its shoulders cast
Of evil law or good, with labouring hand
And mattock, while it did not understand,
Gave Cæsar, so called, Cæsar's. Now at last
Eyes there are opening to behold the vast
And monstrous imposition. Countermand
Our Fathers' evil counsel ere too late,
Who made the Peasant but an open sieve
To sift Earth's fruits thro, and dared to create
A wretched feudal lie that could not live:["]
We took what was not ours, and plunged the State
In slavery, giving what was not ours to give.

CCXXXVII.

O Scotland ! O my Country ! Who can write
Thy greatness down, or who shall sing thy strains,
Thyselv a Singer ! Never Land of plains
Was Poet yet, but Land of mountain height,
And craig, and cliff, and tumbling torrent white
With angry foam ! O young blood in my veins
Of Scotland's oldest, keep me true ; no pains,
No toils too large for Scotland's sake, no fight
Too fierce to enter for her ! Country free
That shook off from thy neck the iron where
So many thought to lay it, seeing thee,
O Mountain Virgin, that Thou wert so fair
And true and noble, Maiden Liberty,
Among the Nations standing Sentinel there !

CCXXXVIII.

O North Land mine, whose fencèd forests breed
 The antlered Stag where once were born thy Sons,
 Whose wild Fawns play where played thy Little-ones !—
 The page lies open and all men may read ;
 Each letter the scattered greystones, whence at need
 Swords leaped to close thy Passes once :—there runs
 An ancient legend of our Northern Duns,
 “ Not gold, O Sire, but food and Folk ”—give heed.—
 Once thy chiefs, counting up their worldly stores,
 Found little wealth, but grimly laughed to feel
 One trusty edge, and see the bright claymores
 That ringed them round a triple fence of steel.—
 God’s curse on those that made thy barren shores
 Where mountain heaths the ruined cots conceal !

CCXXXIX.

God made thy People, God made Earth and Sky,
 And placed us here among these ancient Hills ;
 And made the silver javelins of the rills
 That, shooting to the plain, sing, “ Liberty ! ”—
 Of Fire and Water, Wood and Passage free
 Our Fathers left us heritors, no wills,
 No juggling written parchment that right kills
 Graven on our Highland hearts indelibly.
 Touch now one twig; step from the path and drink ;
 Cut but a sapling ; wander o’er the heath
 Your Fathers wandered, nor had thought to think
 But that their Sons should wander, where beneath
 Today the weary miles of fencing link
 The sacred Stag from Stedding-home’s smoke
 wreath !

CCXL.

What makes us great throughout this world of men !—
It is our common kin and fellowship :
Because no cursed thought had dared to slip
With class distinction twixt us, now as then,
Or high or low, alike of common glen
And common blood, we never felt the whip
That lashes into madness in the grip
Of feudal hands; we strove and conquered, when
In other Lands the Leaders only rose.—
Our Powers were patriarchal, and we bowed
To only him whom direct descent so chose
To represent our Father, and allowed
Him foremost to uphold our name, and close
Dispute authoritative o'er the crowd.

CCXLI.

Who talk with mouth agape of birth and blood !—
My name will match the oldest that the seas
Encircle from the stormy Hebrides
To furthest Kentish Shores, yet it hath stood
Higher no whit in fame and hardihood
Than all those kindred names around : the breeze
That flutters thro our tartans fills the trees
With tongues to cry, as all our children should,—
From acorn unto oak we sprang and grew,
Shed first in seed from the same sturdy stock,
From spring to river as it onward drew,
From the same source we have increased to mock
The ocean with our greatness, showing true
Each pebble part of one grand granite rock.—

CCXLII.

If ye grow faithless and appeal to might,
 No Saxon Serfs are we to bow and dread
 A feudal Lord's fierce thunder overhead,
 But, as of old, are ready for the fight ;
 Resisting to the last your so-called right
 To turn the children from their Sire's Homestead,
 To burn the roof-tree o'er the Grand-Sire's bed,
 To drive men from the country, so to spite
 The great trend of a Nation's Policy.
 Not even in the World's way are ye wise,
 For when the morning rises that must free
 The Hustings from the load that on them lies,
 None will regard you, for our Folk will see
 Those who oppressed with the oppressor's eyes.

CCXLIII.

And such a People as ours are, so true,
 So generous, kind, and noble, so instinct
 With Manhood's purest gold, and so instinct
 With open handedness, and that large view,
 That far off Mountain eye, that looks out blue
 Or gray upon God's World, and sees the kinked
 And knotted rusty chain of things unlinked
 In the dim future to that promised due
 To all life served with noble service here.
 O ye whom station has raised up on high,
 Unto the present whispered voice give ear ;
 Rise up ere the remoter by and by
 Forestall you with a current none can steer
 From those extremes whose waves meet bitterly !

CCXLIV.

England, dear Land of Loves and pleasant hours,
And Friends of noble heart and noble hand !
O Land of Homes ! O Matron Mother Land
Sending thy strong Sons thro the World, with powers
To make the wide World England ! Where the flowers
Sleep soft by Southern seas, or where the brand
Of blazing Central Suns beats fiery grand,
Or where the Polar frost binds, writing "Ours"
On shores and sands and snows, thy People go
By force of birthright ; flesh and blood born strong
Of thee to face the struggle Life, and throw
All workers in that wrestle, where the song
Of labour rises from the World below
That tells the whole World must to thee belong.

CCXLV.

Thou and thy Daughter-Land²⁸ must rule the World.—
It has gone forth : the Stock of Saxon Race,
With many a graft upon it to implace
Fresh blood and growth, takes up the islands pearled
About the seas, and strings them on till curled
They lie upon her breast, her hands deface
The laws of ancient wrong, and Nations grace
Her steps and glad to serve her, who has hurled
Oppression from their necks. Who cry, forsooth,
Against us, let them then cry back the sea !
Our progress is resistless as the truth,
And none can let us that this should not be,
Because from our wild woods and savage youth
We brought, and still bear with us, Liberty !

CCXLVI.

Once only mentioned in all History
 Thy name, O Diodotus,²⁹ like a beacon light,
 Streams o'er the record of that darker night
 When force was law. For this remembered be
 When other names have sunk beneath the sea
 That swallows all things. Yea, thy gallant fight,
 When Wrong nigh mastered half disheartened Right,
 Graves thy name on the ages, whereof we,
 The later children, thank them that they spared
 It for our knowing. That year had been disgraced
 With bloody raiment as it onward fared
 For ever, had not one the danger faced,
 And stood up fearlessly, and nobly dared
 Dispute their prey "with Anger and with Haste."

CCXLVII.

We need thee here today, Someone to rise
 And counter sluggish indolence, and wait
 Upon brute ignorance which is worse than hate,
 Holding the white-hot iron to its eyes
 Until they burst, or see the naked lies
 The gross mouth gapes and swallows ; in our State
 Someone to act beside the idle prate
 Of standers by, and, our curse, party-cries.—
 Seeing that in the vengeance that appalled
 The morrow, each citizen felt personally,
 Better the fierce Athenian mob that called
 The vote for death, than ours who only cry,
 Because some later Cleon that has balled
 They hear and follow out, they know not why !

CCXLVIII.

For Men or Nations 'tis the same : they fall
Who falter at the moment when attacked,
And heart and brain together thunder act,
But timid hand responds not to the call.—
'Tis well to suffer silently for all
Our own shortcomings, but to see the sacked—
To note the wronged—to promise and retract—
Better face downwards with the rifle ball
In heart or brain, face downwards on the grass
Wept by the dews of Heaven to lie clay cold,
Feeling no more the Summers fierce, nor glass
Of ice in freezing Winter's iron hold,
As ever on the Eternal Seasons pass [fold !
Days drive the Stars and Eves the bright Suns

CCXLIX.

Three to three hundred the proportion stands,
You leave three hundred to be ruled by three ;
And those dark Races that called out to thee,—
You pluck your garment from their grasping hands.—
What !—Is it that you fear those bandit bands ?
So choke the truth down lest your eyes should see.—
True, true, we do not call it Slavery,
An ugly word to hear in any Lands.
Yet 'tis not long to write the page nor read.—
The Raid : the rifle : some dark eyes that weep :
Servants required : expression of the need :
The scattered school : the circling wings that
sweep
Over the shot to death : the finished deed :
The *orphan* child that gives his work for keep.^{so}—

CCL.

Peace with the only Free who still have Slaves !—
 Arm but their victims, they would sweep, I say,
 Those brutal Robbers out of Africa
 To trek, if they could, o'er the Eastern waves.
 These wrought foul murder on the Power that saves,
 And there are those above us, who today
 Have stooped to pick their terms up from the clay,
 The where Rebellion flung them : with the graves
 Of those who fell, if buried, not yet green :
 Wonder, you tend the wounded from the fight !
 Seest thou no River that ran wild between,
 No helpless prisoner butchered that midnight !³¹
 Than that such foul dishonour should be seen
 Better a reign of ball and dynamite !

CCLI.

Who will wipe off this shame upon your face,
 O England, whom your rulers spit upon !
 This degradation, rolling on and on,
 Will make your name a byword ! O Disgrace
 On Justice, vilely smitten from her place
 By the lost curs of Party ! It has gone,
 Sold for a vote, our honour that once shone
 So bright a Star before us. Whence this Race,
 Not our Sires surely, but of bastard breed.
 A Eunuch Priest-hood, or like those that led
 The Bull of Apis ! Ah, what tho you bleed,
 Gold buys, they say, more Soldiers in your stead !
 But your dumb lips will to our children plead,
 O gaping wounds of our dishonoured Dead !

CCLII.

Prate of Republics—pah ! Why are not we
The first Republic ! At our head the King
Or Queen State President !—Now that cursed thing
Their petty Tyranny is advanced to be
A vigorous Commonwealth—O lying Plea !
Who now oppressed to England's knees will cling,
What kidnapped wretch his trembling cause will bring
For right to England's Bar ! I fear that he,
Thro those wild Races, could not now be found :
He calls to mind those hills we failed to cross !
The passing Savage here will look around
To his Companion. “Here they met their loss,
Nor further gained !” Will spit upon the ground,
And shrug his shoulders neath his skin kaross !

CCLIII.

The day has passed and gone, and we must set
Our eyes to slumber till the morrow break,
Pray God we do not dream, and, when we wake,
Wake for the Future with our eyelids wet,
And red, and heavy ; we have paid our debt
To wrong, and may the coward payment make
By purchase unto right, and England take
More thought for duties that may wait her yet
Far over sea ! O lips that grandly spoke
For our dear kinsmen of that Noble North,
How grew ye cold that foretime seared the yoke
And in a slavish Senate thundered forth
Against the curse, wherein the dark skinned Folk,
Some deemed, had lasting heritage and wrath !

CCLIV.

Make England once more England as of old !—
 Believe me, 'tis a Liberal policy
 To stretch a sceptre over land and sea,
 Democracy was ever over bold ;
 And tho too proudly poor to lavish gold,
 It aye was ready with a nobler fee,
 Its blood poured out like water.—The more free
 A People grow, we by the Past are told,
 Who strikes at one strikes all ;—and those who ring
 Themselves round with some petty interest,
 Will live to feel that interest rise and sting
 Them, like the fabled serpent, in the breast,
 Their life looked on as an accursed thing,
 Their name a hissing from the East to West.

CCLV.

Sorrow from over sea,—this life of ours
 Is full of sorrows !—Grasses, leaves, and trees
 Have tongues for sorrow, and the laughing leas
 Know not to hide their torn and withered flowers ;
 More sad the sight when some brave tree, that towers
 Still stately o'er the shades beneath, and sees
 Night after night the starry galaxies
 Circling above, falls smitten by the Powers
 Whose working here for good and righteous hand
 We cannot grasp or fathom :—far away
 No doubt some Will makes out its purpose grand,
 But here we only have the light of Day,
 That brighter light to help us understand.—
 God knows ! God knows ! But it is dim and gray !—

CCLVI.

Deep, deep,—yea, draw the edges round that leaf
Of History deep with blackness round, and fill
The bloody spaces up with tears, until
They mingle from two Nations' eyes : in brief,
Now nearer drawn by that great common grief,
We feel the same heart beating in us still,
The same strong blood that did our pulses thrill,
Ere gain had come between us like a thief
To sunder Mother and Child ; as if the World
Were never wide enough for all our loins
Would sow about its plains and rivers curled
Across its Summer tracts, and land that joins
Country to Continent, and the Oceans pearled
With Isles o'er strewn like scattered silver coins.

CCLVII.

Across the wide Atlantic, tho it stands
Between us, comes the cry for sympathy
From Daughter-land to Mother ; for reply
The heart of England, and her pitiful hands,
And breast, and quivering lip that place demands :—
“ I too am part and part of all of thee,
Thy greatness is my greatness, and to me
Thy sorrow grief as deep as mine commands ! ”
O Martyred President ! O Royal seed
Of the true Kings of Men that, just and fair,
Are born among their brethren, but to bleed
In heart or body, as the case may fare
For them, from hireling pen or dastard deed !
Fallen for his Country !—grave it deeply there.

K

CCLVIII.

Yes, we are hushed around that tomb today,
 And who shall shame to say it, that the tears
 Of strong Men fall about it, as one hears,
 In thought, that lonely Widow with her stay
 And friend torn from her ! Brother country, lay
 Your hand upon her arm, and thro the years
 Stand in his place, who without craven fears
 Stood betwixt you and danger, and repay
 Some little of the love he bore you, when
 He sealed it with his life, no lesser price ;
 Struck down like one who fell before him then
 And saved the Union : May this last life suffice !
 Christian, and Compeer of your greatest men,
 By fate fulfilled his Country's sacrifice !

CCLIX.

So ever for his Country falls some King,
 And o'er his grave his People stand up strong ;
 The time is weary and the time is long,
 But with joined hands we swear that cursed thing
 That wrought his death no more its gain shall bring
 And we not know the reason of the wrong,
 Nor arm the hand of Justice with a thong
 To scourge the Prowlers ever lingering
 About the Public Coffers, with their eyes
 And mouths agape at that accursed thought,
 That for the Party Victory, the prize
 Is a spoiled State, and office sold and bought,
 And death against the Ruler who would rise
 And raise his Folk to that for which they fought.

CCLX.

He failed not, tho he fell, if his red blood
Wash out the muddy stains that cast disgrace
Upon the hand that grasped the reins of Place,
And his vile murder broaden into good.—
Throughout all days, half made, half understood,
Things work to better things: the iron mace
Of shattering Time not only doth efface,
But, trowel like, builds up a manhood
Of higher hope from what our human mind
Would count lost fragments; and we nearer draw
To common brotherhood with all our kind,
And common Freedom neath a common law;
And, tho the onward ages may be blind,
Their hands smooth out the Future flaw by flaw.

CCLXI.

I have no fear for England while I know
That younger, larger, England o'er the Main;
England of Homes!—I hope to see again
This England here, our England, once more grow
To its old Epithet!—Not in dreary Row,
Blind Alley, Court, and grim and hateful gain
Of contract brick and mortar, wrung in pain
From weary toil like bloody sweat to flow
About the streets that stifle out God's light
And air and sunshine; but in Homes that lie
By Country ways, half buried out of sight
In green, but yet with others neighbourly.—
Not for the Wealth that gilds a Nation's Night,
But a Land full of Freemen, I would cry!

CCLXII.

Comes an old cry across the shuddering sea
 Filling with horror all its hollows deep,
 Where tongueless waves make moaning as they creep
 Against the shore, that, stilled for sympathy
 Too sad for words, is silent : to you, to me
 An Elder Brother cries, and those that weep
 Are Sisters, and the swinish souls that steep
 Their hands in blood, and lust, and villainy,
 The modern Helots of the World, made heir
 Today anew to the buried dark that lies
 Neath the foul feet and in the bloody lair
 Of all the cruel former Centuries :—
 England, who hearkened not the strong man's prayer,
 Hear the shamed woman and her children's cries !

CCLXIII.

My foot upon her neck, and in my hand
 The branding iron, on her brow to burn
 The sign of scorn, wherefrom all men may learn
 Her brutish lust, whose Rulers see and stand
 Aside, yea verily, and urge on the band
 Made theirs by ignorance, that they may not turn
 But still hound down the quarry. Ye that spurn
 Arms stretched for pity to your feet, your Land
 Shall be a byword yet of evil grime !
 Out-draft of Peoples ! Spittle on the blast !
 For from the Gone we know, and, reading Time,
 Foretell sure retribution at the last :—
 Here never Nation idly suffered crime
 And paid not tenfold vengeance for the Past !

CCLXIV.

O Coward, Coward ! Have ye never Sons
Ye would see spared in *that* day, nor Wives
Whose honour ye hold dearer than your lives,
No Maiden Daughters, and no Little-ones !
The heart of Pity almost stops and runs
Cold, bloodless, dry, to think that Time arrives !—
But Pity pales, then blushes red and strives
No more, her arm, for lightnings and for Suns,
Is braced and bare : on the red corn ripening here
And on the young shoots together she will repay
A tooth for tooth, and eye for eye, and fear
No Master that will hold her hand or stay ;
And ye shall cry to Pity, whose deaf ear
Will tend no cry for pity on *that* Day !

CCLXV.

By the blood-guiltiness upon thy face,
By blood on hand and raiment and on foot,
By savage lust and blood that marks thee Brute,
By all the terrors round thy Rulers place,
By each and all the edicts that disgrace
Thy statutes, by the poison that doth shoot
Throughout thy Social frame, by branch and root:
To slough off from the Nations, by that Race,
O Leper whiter than your Northern snows,
Whose blood you spill and drink with savage thirst,
O first turned faithless out of all of those
Appointed stewards, faithless last and first,
By surely nearing pangs and coming throes,
Gehazi of the Nations, thou art cursed !

CCLXVI.

And ye, O Ancient People, ye that cry
 To all the Nations, be ye strong to bear
 The waning curse, until departing, there
 Ye leave it for fulfilment ! Let it lie
 An everlasting land-mark set, whereby
 All names shall know the People that no prayer
 Could move to mercy !—No ! no part or share
 Have they with those who shall be lifted high.—
 For thro the clouds shines out the diadem
 Crowning the promise that they must increase,
 And spoil the Soul of those that spoiled them,
 And turn the chains of captives to release,
 Breaking the judgments whereby Kings condemn ;
 For great shall be their children and their peace.

CCLXVII.

Thine eyes in beauty shall behold the King
 And see the Land beneath thee lie afar,
 A city quiet as the evening Star,
 Or as her young beneath a Mother's wing :
 The glory of His Presence, as a ring,
 Shall guard thee round, no Foe shall mark or mar,
 For He shall keep thee who His People are
 And build thy walls of every glorious thing.
 Washed by broad rivers, streams, and waters great,
 Wherein shall go no galley on with oars,
 No gallant ship pass to annoy thy gate,
 No sound of Foe be heard upon thy shores,
 No beasts about the Land, no ambush wait,
 But Plenty, Peace, and bursting garner doors !

CCLXVIII.

All other earthly Peoples culminate,
And when the point is touched, with slow decay,
Or swift, may be, begin to fade away
In second childhood : every Stem or State
Goes thro three phases ; first the rise, more late
It sees all Rivals at its feet to slay,
Or captive to despise, its latest day
Knows its own waning swift or slowly great.—
Tho battered much and bruised about the World
Thou art the nation still of Hope, thine eyes
Are on the rising uplands, where, bepearled
With freshening manna-dew, the hills arise
Wide round that starry standard, yet unfurled,
Tho standing there thro all the centuries.

CCLXIX.

Daughter of the Dispersed, He shall bring
Thy children back beneath the morning Sun
Of that fair dawn, that, as the cycles run
More near the finish, nearer draws ; and ring
Thee with a girdle as of steel, for King
And Queen, thy Lovers all shall rise as one,
And bring thee back, as she who is undone
But feels once more a Father's shadowing wing !
For, no more haughty of thy Holy Hill,
Thy wide arms stretching to embrace all Folk,
Thy humbled heart repenting of the ill
That thou hast worked, thy neck drawn from the
yoke,
That day the gathered ages will fulfil
The words of One that never vainly spoke !

CCLXXII.

Yea, for I feel it ! It is in the air ;
The Land is full of progress :—not alone
Of painted vase, or cunning carven stone,
Or in the wheels whose working everywhere
Speed the swift trains and serve the ploughing share,
Or in the knowledge that sets truer bone
To joint, and saves the agony and the groan
Beneath the knife with that kind æther rare ;
Not only in knowledge of each Continent,
And name and knowledge of all Nature's Brood,
And whence this Comet came, and whence that went,
Why this or that was long misunderstood ;
But, as the World moves on to its event,
We aye are growing up to greater good !

CCLXXIII.

Mid jars and discords Earth is working out,
I deem it, to a higher state of things
This weary struggle, Life : tho oft her wings
Would seem to flag, with earnest heart and stout
Humanity strives up ; tho all about
The blindfold path she wanders, closing clings
The heavy mist of wrong, a clear note rings,
Heard from the mountain tops, to aid the doubt
In those nigh fainting thro the strain and stress
Of the world-warfare ; low of voice, but sure,
It points to this one end without digress,
Prophetic of the thing that must endure,
A nobler manhood of more manliness,
A nobler womanhood more purely pure.—

CCLXXIV.

The weight of years comes on us slow and sure,
 Old Age, Old Age, the Winter of our Prime,
 Draws warmth and comfort from the Summer time,
 But sadly sighs, What comfort can endure !—
 The Bird of Time hath never answered lure ;
 The Snake steals on deaf to all charm or rhyme ;
 They heed no lower Voice, who upwards climb ;
 No drop returns poured earthwards from the Ewer ;
 As every Hour its measured length unbinds
 Swifter than any Shuttle speeds each Day,
 And passes like the breath of Summer winds,
 But aye recalled, for the gaping clay,
 Our barren Age, a sorry solace finds
 Remembering them as waters passed away.

CCLXXV.

Time is a Scarabæus rolling on
 Its ball of present dirt to that dark hole
 We call the Past, the ever present goal
 Of all that Time collects in one upon
 The whole wide Earth, where everything agone,
 Accumulating up with many a roll,
 It backwards thrusts ; tho here and there, with Soul
 Above its sort, some Stick, or Straw, or Stone,
 Be left a moment, brief its little stay ;
 For to the smallest loss he keeps his eyes,
 Going hind-first ever, and at close of day
 Safe in the hollow pit his burden lies :—
 But in the gathered dirt he hides away
 Bides a new Life that will again arise.

CCLXXVI.

All things are ours in our October days :—

We know the sweet and bitter, and they meet

Before us, shunned or cherished, sour or sweet,
Ah, they have lost unmeasured blame or praise !—
For, tho with trembling poise the balance weighs,

Age gives good answer, calls out more complete

The make and meaning of all things, his feet
Are broader based, and walk without the maze

Of passion, prejudice, and folly swift

To take up cause to answer and debate :

For, tho is lost that fairy younger gift

That gilded life once, lingering over late,

Age, piercing, reads thro the now open rift

Between the clouds, lifts hand and answers,

“Wait” !—

CCLXXVII.

Age comes upon us basking in the Sun ;

Facing the South, before the laurel hedge ;

Watching the vapours at the hill's green edge,
And the white Sheep, that, their siesta done,
Chew sleepy or browse scattered one by one ;

And far beyond the downland's long blue ledge,

With the slant sunlight, like a broad gold wedge,

Filling the valley that to them doth run :

Then Age moves on to where the garden-walk

Meets the high garden-wall, and in the breeze

The shaken laurels speak, as none can talk

But the sweet tongues of grasses, ferns, and trees,—

For every feathery frond and grassy stalk

Have voices round the garden terraces.

CCLXXVIII.

And what a study of Life the garden-wall,
 Where first begins, in unkept loveliness,
 The glorious wealth of weeds and flowers, and mess
 Of unswept leaves that from the Elm trees fall,
 Which border in the scene, brown, broad, and tall,
 And look o'er many a tassel, bloom, and tress,
 And o'er the danker, darker, dim recess
 Where pallid plants and uncouth creepers sprawl,
 Pining for light, uncared by hand of man ;
 And Nettles, yellow, green, and indigo ;
 And out more in the Sunlight, but still wan,
 Some Rhododendrons fate has settled so
 For life; and then the brave Valerian,
 With purple bunchy head, our Hedges know.

CCLXXIX.

There, glowing, stood the glorious Copper-Beech,
 Like a brown Beauty blushing thro her skin
 Of warmer colour than the blood within
 Allows the Blonde ; and there the flowering Peach ;
 The yellow-green Laburnum drooped ; and each
 Strong Scotch Fir stretched its arms aloft to win
 Some boon from Heaven ; in silver, straight and thin,
 The graceful Birch, that, stooping down, did reach
 Her Lady fingers out to all to kiss ;
 The Walnut, with large leaves and lordly head ;
 The ebon-budded weeping Ash ; and his
 Wide branching arms, the Oak of lordly spread ;
 The Aspen, saddest of all trees, that is ;
 The Autumn Chestnut burning into red.

CCLXXX.

There, too, the dear Holm-Oak, my favourite tree,
Of silvery under-leaf and light and shade,
With dreams of many a Story, many a Maid ;
Magician of the Woods, that back to me
Brings many a Legend, that of old, may be,
Was acted, ere the garden-world was laid
Or bound with brick and mortar : there the staid,
Stiff Poplar shoots up like a lance to free
Some Dame that sits beyond the silver cloud
Waiting her Knight ; and that quaint character,
The Araucarian, with his prickly crowd
On every branch, whence Ape and Man defer
Their climbing for another ; and the proud,
Broad Cedar, King of every Conifer.

CCLXXXI.

And all about a wealth of flowers and leaves
Full of the golden Sunlight on the grass,
Save where the shadows fall in chequered mass,
Or from some tree-stem, where the sward receives
A deeper line of shadow : here he weaves
His delicate gossamer gummy lines of glass,
The Spider, that, the instant that you pass,
Grows dry and shrivelled and the birds deceives.
A distant hum of Bees : more near the Drone,
An idle, noisy fellow, fills the air ;
Helped by the Bumble-bee, of deeper tone,
Half buried in the flowers that open there ;
The Blue-bottle that suns upon that stone,
Finds, too, his lazy life no doubt as fair.

CCLXXXII.

A few steps down, and, sleeping lazily,
 The Pond shows still and glassy, but withal
 Brown after last night's rain, wherefore the small
 Wee water things are not so seen ; but try !—
 Look ! On a rush a great green Dragon-fly ;
 And down below, the Ishmaelite to all,
 The Water-Tiger ; and, with limbs that crawl
 Or paddle lightning-swift at need, the sly
 Great Water-Beetle ; and the Silver one,
 His smaller cousin ; and the Spider Race
 Well represented, Shapes that dive and run
 And fill with life and History all the place ;
 And, sleeping lazily beneath the Sun,
 The Burdock leaves of broad and bumpkin face

CCLXXXIII.

Broad Water-Lilies, with each china plate
 Of their great leaves, by lavish Nature sent,
 Some purple and some green, to represent
 Her service, and how grandly she keeps state ;
 The open Flowers, half drowned by their own weight ;
 The opening Buds that rise up straight, intent
 Only on their own beauty, and repent
 Their early opening only when too late :
 And under the Dwarf-Alder, that doth fling
 Its shade forth, flourishes many a weed and wort :
 And the Soft-Willow, known no more a King,
 Its catkins gone, and in its work-day shirt,
 Hides down beneath it many a living thing
 With life of joy and sorrow, help and hurt.

CCLXXXIV.

All the old cattle of the Fairy-tale

One watches in the water, mirrored well

For all the brown tint of the glass, to tell

That Eve draws on, and now, from up the vale

They near the Pool's edge, where the big gnats sail

Above the Midges, half invisible,

But both together singing stout the knell

Of the warm hours that gin to cool and fail :

For all the Weeds have taken a darker green,

And deeper toned neat bush and tree the shade ;

And all the Hemlock tops stand out between

The darker lines, like lonely ghosts unlayed ;

Before our eyes upon the darkening scene

The Rabbits play and are no more afraid.

CCLXXXV.

The Night-Hawk swoops down on the grass, and sits,

Fearless and crouched, beside us at the edge

Of the dark Pool ; as, from the neighbouring Hedge,

Twitters a noisy family of Tits,

Settling their quarrels for the night, and bits

Of small Bird gossip ; and, like a black sledge,

The Slug slides on the Dock-leaf, near the ledge

Of ruined brickwork ; and, with all his wits

About him, grey against the further dark,

Hungry and hopeful, the Owl leaves his house,

The ruined Tower o'erhead, and quick to mark,

Noiseless himself, the least move of the mouse.—

And, remnant sole of Races ere the Ark,

Creeps from his log chinks out the wee Woodlouse.

CCLXXXVI.

Up comes the Water-Beetle,—flies away
 Upon his nightly forage ; and the Bat
 Wheels o'erhead after any Fly or Gnat
 He haps across ; and in the darkened Day,
 For Night is Day as well as Night, the play
 Of its own Insect-World on flowers that
 See from their petals the great eyes whereat
 We stood afraid in Childhood, when the gay
 Great Butterflies were Fairies, but the brown
 Strong Moths were Gnomes, or Dæmons ; some
 with head
 Of evil look and sting,—poor harmless down—
 That look the ghastly features of the Dead,
 And mouselike squeak, to fright the timid Clown
 With many a tale by gossip Ale-wives said.

CCLXXXVII.

Now the trees, touched about with silver light,
 Show the slow rise of the three-quarter Moon,
 And the dark clouds that lighter grow, for soon
 The mild orb rises and—good-bye to Night ;—
 As all the Landscape swims up on our sight
 With distant wealth of City, Spire, and Dune,
 And ancient Camp, and Cirque of stones unhewn,
 Beside a Sea of darkest malachite.

Peace is on all and rest without an end,
 An infinite peace, which none to break are found ;
 No word from far those starry Wastes may send,
 No sigh for them is breathed up by the ground ;—
 And so we turn, and so we homewards tend,
 Content with Self and with the World around.

CCLXXXVIII.

But sudden falls the dark Tower's shade on us ;
And a cold Hand comes from the shadow out
And draws its fingers round our heart, to rout
All peace with its weird power mysterious.—
"Pour out the Past before thee, and, if thus
Thou fill the measure of this goblet stout
To over-flow, whom none can pass without
Redraining, ye may pass injurious
To none, by all uninjured : but if thou
Hast nothing wherewith ye may fill the cup,
Lay thy cold hand upon thy colder brow,
And dare not for the Past's pale sake look up ;
For none who draw nigh bare and mean, I trow,
May enter here and solemn sit and sup !"—

CCLXXXIX.

Ah ! 'tis no fancied Form that, face to face,
Meets all of us, when we would fain return,
After our sunning, home again, and yearn
For rest and peace in some familiar place.—
Here we are our own Judges, and disgrace
Or praise mete out, and set the steel to burn
The brand upon our wrist, or set the stern
High signet of acquittal from our Race
Upon our hand stretched out that he may see
Who watches at the Portal, to admit
Those whose own Conscience answers loftily—
"Thyself reads thy own self and doth acquit."
As the Form sinks upon its bony knee,
And the doors groan and widen over it.

L

CCXC.

Ah ! Age, Age, Age, art thou more wise than youth,—
 Full-blooded youth, that laughs at yellow Age !
 For it comes from a further Pilgimage ;
 The other walks more childishly, forsooth,
 But doubtless to renewal ; tho with ruth
 And bitter herbs of memory, yet with gage
 And promise still beyond the printless page,
 Plain white, and to be turned by Hands uncouth
 That pile the clods and throw the whiter bones
 Upon the graveside from the soil below,
 And grumble out in sullen undertones,
 Seeing no more than the four walls they know,
 Neath the dank acres and the standing stones,
 More Soulless than the mould thro which they go.

CCXCI.

Is Age all blackness, with no silver cloud
 Against the black sky, and no ray of light
 To flash thro the sad soul, once crysolite
 And sparkling out on all, and over proud
 In its own glory ? Yea, and Nay ! The shroud
 Would seem all black, but ever on the sight
 There streams a meteor o'er with fiery flight,
 But leaving a gloom that seems to speak aloud
 With the awful voice of silence, that one hears
 Welling up from the Past upon Today ;
 'Tis not alone theplash of dropping tears
 That make a sound too sad for words to say,
 But that still awful presence of the years
 That round us in, tho they have passed away.

CCXCII.

'Tis a strange thing that we can never cast
The consciousness of self away, and fling
Our Souls into some other Being, or thing,
And rise up bold and fearless of the Past.—
Why should things gone affect us to the last,
And net us down, and hold us lingering
Beneath the meshes, bound with many a ring,
And neath those eyes that either bless or blast,
But draw their power alone from us, and what
Ourselves have made them capable to do?—
Facts, actions crumble, perish, dry, and rot,
But the Intention ever lives and new,
Fiercer, the more we would remember not,
And staining black o'erhead the infinite blue.

CCXCIII.

No chink or crevice but the wind doth howl
Above and thro it, and the piping note
Hath more of sadness in its slender throat
Than any wail of hopeless Jin or Ghoul
About the tomb-stones, on their nightly prowl
Beneath the moon, that seems to lie and gloat
Over their misery, as the hunting Stoat
Pricks ear, stands up, then slips off from their foul,
Unholy presence; and all of Nature strives
Shun them and flee, as withered leaves whirl off,
Borne down beyond the trees' gloom, whence arrives,
From the dark forest, flout, and jeer, and scoff,
And agonized screams of taken lives,
And the black-monkey's melancholy cough.—

CCXCIV.

A spell of Summer on a Winter's day,
 Breaking with sunlight lances on the snows,
 Filling the North with brightness, and the glows
 Of gold and crimson in celestial ray !—
 Will ye not last to gild the leaves' decay
 And put new life into the faded rose,
 And silver, with your silent overflows,
 The branches grim before you fade away !
 O Floods of parting glory ! where the gleam
 Of the broad Sunset dyes the mountain tops,
 Puts new blood in the snows, until they seem
 Like lands made ruddy with the ripening crops,
 And the great orb above them—glorious dream,
 And soon to pass—e'en now it drops ! it drops !

CCXCV.

Ah ! The Sun sinks across the Southern sea
 And draws the darkness down at his depart,
 That fills the shores, and fills the weary heart,
 And lays its fingers upon you and me ;
 The other hand points, dim and silently,
 Scarce seen but known, across the waves that start
 Against our feet, or sink away and part
 And leaye a place for footsteps going free
 Along the sands and oozes, that resound
 Against the rocks above us and the main,
 And starting round to see new Forms are found
 By our poor eyes that pierce the gloom in vain ;
 And hollow tones that mutter underground
 Mix with the sea, are heard, and lost again.

CCXCVI.

But broad across the waters breaks the Moon :—
The Sun of life is gone, may be, yet still
The tenderer Moon makes all things visible,
Not seen too sudden, too far off, or soon,
But as in some sweet sleepy afternoon,
With eyes half shut, beside the purling rill,
We saw all shapes of things not well, or ill,
We see them now in Life's more later June.—
For tho we lose the outline, edge, and shape,
With broader shadow and more sweeping brush
We paint, and narrowing littleness escape :
And, tho we hear no dashing fountain's gush
Of young Life's waters, against cove and cape
Come the sea waves with sweet and solemn hush.

CCXCVII.

A Moon-lit Sea !—I think that in her store
Of beauteous things, far the most beautiful
That Nature hath, is the great solemn, cool,
Blue, strong Moon-lighted Sea ; upon the shore
Telling her love-tale out, and o'er and o'er
Repeating to the rocks the gentle rule,
The rule of love, taught ere the rougher School
Of stormy winds raised her to leap and roar
Impatient of control ; for, now returned
Neath the old sway, she lays her heart and hands
Upon his breast who never Lover spurned,
Whose arms go out and hold her to his lands ;
As Sea meets Shore with lips that sobbed and yearned,
Is mixed and married and mingled with the sands.

CCXCVIII.

God moved by moonlight on the Sea :—His feet,
 Trackless across the waters, went and laid
 The rising waves, until men were afraid,
 Years past in Galilee, His face to meet.
 That face of Man that was so calm and sweet,
 Like nothing earthly here of Man or Maid
 But the great Sea, when every wind is staid,
 And Nature stills, His Presence here to greet.—
 God moves upon the waters, and they take
 The imprint of His Presence, as the clay
 The graven Seal, or when we lie awake,
 Our night-thoughts all the semblance of the day.—
 O Sea ! O Sea, and must the morning break
 When thou must, like a Shadow, pass away !

CCXCIX.

The World and we are Pilgrims on one road :
 And awful thoughts stare full-face on our Soul,
 Shot from some unknown to some unknown goal
 They pierce our flesh, and fiercely onwards goad
 The Soul that carries here the weary load,
 The weighing, dragging flesh. What Spaces roll
 Around !—With whitherward directed Pole
 Makes the great Earth !—And we to what abode !—
 How many tremors, and how many a spin
 Takes the vast World along !—They show in us—
 For Body and Soul together wander in
 The same wild Seas or Deserts marvellous,
 Act and re-act, and if at last they win
 Some resting-place, 'tis strangely gained thus !

CCC.

Yea, in the weary waning of our years
We grow well weary of our pilgrim suit,
And weary of the road and wounded foot,
And weary for the end that ever nears,
But is so long a-nearing ! And the cheers
That met us from the mountains, and the fruit
Of early youth, and notes of pipe, and lute,
Are all passed now, unheard of our dull ears.
And as we pass neath gloom of arching glade,
Grim doubts assail us of our onward quest ;
Moments when, weary of all we have made,
We long for peace in death forever blessed ;
E'en as the workman watches for the shade
To lengthen Eastwards and to bring him rest.—

CCCI.

The cold winds from the corners of the East,
Wail thro the forest, and the leaves grow red
To Autumn harvest, and the ground, o'ershade
With fallen buds, and petals, mourns the ceased
Bright Suns of Summer ; naked and decreased
Of former glory, and ungarlanded
Of gold and green, the bleak boughs stiffen dead,
And no stream weeps, for iron grows the least
Down dropping tear, that freezes ere it falls.—
So on us comes the Winter of our years,
But its snows sparkle to the Sun ;—as Saul's
Dark Soul was lighted up, when on his ears
Fell David's harp-notes, bringing back the calls
And cries of Childhood, none there is but hears.—

CCCII.

The Past we look on as a day's work done.—
 We view the furroughs we have ploughed, or view
 The broken ridges where the thistles grew,
 And all the brown and good land we have won
 To use and profit; but there comes on one
 The little done of all he meant to do.—
 The nothingness of Life before the blue
 Vast over all, that swallows up the Sun,
 The Sun himself, behind that darkening veil
 Time draws to curtain out what went before.—
 Like Fishers we, who leave no trace or tale
 Save some brief bubbles from the homeward prore,
 When hawling in they hoist the evening sail
 With the sea-breeze at sunset for the shore.

CCCIII.

Ah distant Shore! Dim Land, where all of us
 In some gulf current ever onwards tend,
 How near and yet how far off is that end
 That rises up beyond our vain discuss!—
 How tenderly and over tremulous
 The mists rise up to hide it, and to blend
 The fair, and what would fright us, as we bend
 Fresh canvas on, strike sail, or stay and truss
 Our bending mast before the fresh'ning breeze,
 The which to see a few miles on we climb,
 Look out ahead, and all our sight that flees
 Is that of all the Ages seen sublime,
 Blown over those unfathomable Seas,
 The fleet of Life before the breath of Time!—

CCCIV.

Proud in his Summer strength the Sun comes forth,
Embattled bright in beautiful array
Before the open armoury of Day,
Yet tender for the tender in his wrath ;
For, ever waiting in the iron North,
He sees the winter that will yet have sway,
And dim his glory : so upon our way
Youth ever sees far off that white-haired fourth
That rounds in manhood :—and the step of man
Spares the grey grass, but crushes down the green ;
So something personal in that higher plan
That works above puts in the hook between
The withered stalks, leaves them where'er it can,
And takes the young flowers that make gay the
scene.

CCCV.

How Earth's flowers differ !—Not in myriad hues
Alone, but in the brightness they express
Of higher meaning than mere petaled dress
Of gardened glory or Nature's wider views.—
For some there are, seeing whom we cannot choose
But be led higher from the thoughtlessness
Of the eye's glory only, tho no less
Those round are rich in purples, greens, and blues.
Some poor plain blossom on the cottage shelves,
Mid delf and broken pottery, catches us
In an instant from the world ; tho loved of Elves,
The flowers and tender fern-fronds oft fail thus
To lift us up and draw us from ourselves
To that far state more high and marvellous.

CCCVI.

In those two sacred twilights, Morn and Eve,
 Where none see surely, but where thoughts are sure,
 And come with potency to cleanse, make pure,
 And raise the Spirit that the flesh makes grieve,
 Perchance we gain some knowledge, and receive
 The promise of the days that must endure,
 That ever touch these days of ours, and lure
 Out higher up ; the which we aye deceive
 Into a foolish slumber by a stream
 Where, open-eyed, upon the charmed wave
 We gaze, determined only here to dream,
 Nor ever look upon the clouds, made brave
 Over the Sea by sunset, till the scream
 Of some strange seabird startles rock and cave.

CCCVII.

We all need shaking from our sleep and lust,—
 Our sluggard lust,—for what no friction jars :—
 Give us no faces shining like the stars
 To wake our hearts to question and distrust
 Of our heart's goodness, but those o'erlaid with the dust
 And pollen of the world, glowed by the bars
 Of tender Venus, not of fiery Mars,
 Whose watchword is—"As thou wilt"—not—"Thou
 must."—
 O Faces lit from other worlds than ours,
 Imperial in your half-unconscious sway,
 Before whom nothing evil is but cowers,
 Whose light is from a Sphere of other day,
 Touched by the finger of some mightier power's
 Effulgent might that bids us here obey !—

CCCVIII.

They whose whole soul is pure within glow forth
And make the invisible thing take visible
Shape and expression, whereby men may tell
The glory here of Goodness : not the wrath
Of tossing waves upon the sleepless Forth
Alone is glorious, but the gentle swell
Of the sea, at peace with itself, shows miracle
Of grander worth than all the howling North
In angry winter round the headlong verge
Of the Atlantic Capes, that stretch an arm
Among the boiling breakers and emerge
In iron strength unbroken without harm.—
Aye, tho' fierce wave each fiercer wave did urge,
Before His Face they quailed away in calm.

CCCIX.

Here the white light of goodness absolute,
Like a lamp within some delicate porcelain urn,
Shines from the face that does as heavenly burn,
And bends before its awfulness the brute
In man of grosser fibre ; such sure fruit
Of goodness follows on the Souls that yearn
For holiness ; if but the intentions turn
To that Pole ever, the result will suit
The face to that Sun's brightness ; we descry
A higher light than that of intellect,
For oft the poor in knowledge, standing high,
Awes down the larger brain, and makes deflect
The arrow of attack, from him whose eye
That mirrored light strikes blind and doth reject.

CCCX.

It is the consciousness of Right that makes
 The heart's great gladness and the Stephen's look
 In face of wrong, and 'tis the written Book
 Of Knowledge, open to our eyes, that shakes
 The heart at conscious evil. Something breaks
 All spider-webs of thought away ; we brook
 Deep in us never thought but is o'ertook
 By those two equal Runners : one with aches
 And pains of Hell companioned, and the one
 Bearing along with it the balm of Heaven.—
 No doubt the lime is oft burnt dry in the Sun,
 But add one drop of water, and the leaven
 Steams out and rises, till the mass is run
 Throughout with sentience that makes bold or
 craven.

CCCXI.

Below our surface one great River flows ;
 One smaller Stream above it, tho unseen ;
 And one large River, open thro the green
 Of sunny fields and quaking osier-rows,
 Which everybody looks on as it goes.—
 For one is our existence, that is seen,
 Patent to all ; the other, that which has been,
 And is ; the third, what each man thinks he knows
 To be himself : the largest, hidden most,
 Hides the deep things of knowledge in its bed :
 The other, skirting down a higher coast,
 Deems that its waves are Wisdom's : and o'erhead
 The broad and sunlit Stream is often lost
 On silver stretches or in shallows dead.

CCCXII.

Tho, like a folded garment or a scroll,
The Heavens may wither up, and every Sphere
Pass into nothingness, and leave a clear
Blank space where once their Systems used to roll,
I know the Constellations of the Soul
Would burn forever on above : no Year,
Or *Æon*, e'er bring change to those, that here,
Today as ever, round the central Pole
Of Truth eternal swim, and write upon
The skies one name, Eternal Truthfulness.—
'Tis our proud knowledge, no Soul's Babylon
Falls down but neath some Law's o'ermastering
stress,
And that those Laws would circle on and on,
Tho all that is passed into nothingness.

CCCXIII.

It comes but once :—those voices of His light,—
If man makes midnight of their rose and dark,
Casts steamy water on their glowing spark,
First whisper—“ Better that he ne'er had sight,”
Then burst in laughter thro his brain, despite
The maddened hands against the brows ; no Lark
That sings in Heaven but laughs him wild ; and stark
And pale, and dead hangs all Earth's fruitage bright,
A dead world round the dead Soul ; never more
Shine Sun or Stars, but only Shapes of dread
Look lurid thro the gloom ; and on the shore
The sullen Ocean, from the further red
Beyond the waters, moans out o'er and o'er,
“ There is a Death-in-Life that coveteth the Dead.”

CCCXIV.

The laughter of the Soul against itself
 Is bitterness too bitter to be borne
 But by a Soul immortal, and the scorn
 Of self is bitterer than the hugest pelf
 Hate ever hoarded up on mouldy shelf
 To set some day before the hated, drawn
 After long toil into the trap ; no morn
 E'er rose more miserable on the Elf,
 Spell-bound forever to some hated toil,
 Than Conscience' Sun uprises on the Soul
 That sees and knows its meanness and its soil,
 That blacks its whiteness, open-eyed, to coal,
 With knowing hand its hopes and heights doth spoil
 And dim the brightness of its gloriole.

CCCXV.

What ! Wilt thou chase the leaves caught by the wind,
 Or wreak thy vengeance on the helpless grass,
 Kick here at every thorn that brings to pass
 The thorny thoughts that tear the tortured mind
 And harrow up the soul, and march behind,
 Goading the fettered prisoner, that, alas,
 Hath forged both goad and fetters ! Upon the glass,
 Fixed by the Sun, the awful shapes designed
 The lasting mirror of some wickedness
 Gloom all that we see thro it, with the stain
 Of wrong between our sight, and, sad distress,
 The world beyond we look upon in vain ;
 For who shall wipe the vision off, make less
 The darkness round and clear our eyes again ?

CCCXVI.

As those that, long ago, to be more clean,
Bethought to wash themselves with melted snow,
We see the Soul make fierce the flesh to go
Against its nature : here ascetic spleen,
With green eyes looking out on Nature's green,
And dull brain bidding dull brain not to know ;
In fire ; in cutting ; and in swinging slow
With hook in shoulders to the tambourine,
And shouting from dark faces ; and the death
Beneath the crushing wheels of that grim car ;
The sacred handkerchief that robbed of breath
And life ; the Devil-dancers shout afar,
Breaking the still when all Earth slumbereth ;
And secret sacrifice to many a Star.

CCCXVII.

Needs a strong Power to master flesh and blood ;
Some mightier Involution than we dream
Must flow into our humanhood with stream
O'er mastering, or no force of manhood could
Evolve that set, determined hardihood
To be ruled by Something not ourselves : the scream
Of her own infant in the flames would seem
Powerless against the Power for bad or good
To move the mother ; for, once conscience caught,
To man was nothing that there might not be
Devoted to the Furies : whence this wrought,
And how, none answereth ; save on you and me
It comes, but for wise ends as His who taught
The tossing waters peace and stilled the Sea.

CCCXVIII.

The Fiend Ambition never worked so fierce
 As the misdirected God, Man's Conscience, here ;
 Tho one strives ever onwards without fear
 Against the clouds, with effort high to pierce
 Audacious for itself, past carte and fierce
 Of any thought's fence, it can never sear
 The whole man but by failure ; but the clear
 Heard, whisper of the other can amerce
 With cruel fine the Soul before its act
 Was well conceived, and, ere that it enjoys
 The plucked-up flowers, 'tis bitterly attacked ;
 The fruit, ere marked of tooth, grows sour and cloys,
 For the strong Town is from its centre sacked,
 Having in it the Foe that so destroys.

CCCXIX.

Our Earth is never tremorless and still ;—
 Hence in the present none can weigh the force
 That, from the midmoon, gravitates with source
 Of unknown touch and trouble : every rill
 And stream, down flowing, as it ever will,
 Means more than we may wot of ; so the course
 Of Conscience is not like an eager horse
 Over a solid plain, or like a mill
 That grinds out steadily, for aye its stones
 Are shook of other power than of the stream ;
 And here, with tones played out, mix semitones
 That none can catch and measure, for the dream
 That lies upon us more than any owns,
 In which things work, but are not what they seem.

CCCXX.

Today the Land is full of light, the cloud
Has lifted higher from the far off blue
And opened out the green and purple view
Of cornfields and of heather, and the crowd
Of Fir-trees edging on the moors that shroud
The Sea from sight, save when a break lets thro,
Between the Broom, a shifting Sail, or Mew,
A sail herself ; here the green waves aloud
Speak in their sleep, but all the shores are dumb,
And make no answer to their old Love's word ;
And all the gorse sends out a sleepy hum ;
And the Fall meets the sea in fleecy curd,
But, by the summer still so overcome,
Without a sound of falling water heard.

CCCXXI.

And, like the stream, the little Village flows
Silent between the cliffs down to the sea,
That now in deeper sleep lies silently
About its feet, where lean, in ordered rows,
The red-sailed fishing-boats, the barque that goes,
Adventuresome, perchance to Normandy,
Or Spain, no further, and the forestry
Of smaller vessels still that rub their bows,
Like basking Sharks, against the buoys, or scrape
With painter slack the grey stones of the pier,—
Pier and Breakwater both in one,—and 'scape
The rougher waves outside that roll and rear :—
Beyond the green clothed cliffs, or rugged shape
Of bare rock cut against the skyline clear.

M

CCCXXII.

Such tangled woods to climb in, hands and feet
 Both wanted, quickened eye and steady nerve
 When, by grasped branch, we mount some outward
 curve
 And reach the ledge, the first that that retreat
 Has e'er received, save Sea-gull with its beat
 Of helping wings : up, up, and then we swerve ;—
 No higher here ;—must make some new path serve
 To pass the point's bald brow, for no defeat
 Could we allow from Southern cliff or Scaur.—
 O tender green, where, from some creviced rock,
 A tiny spring steals out, and wanders o'er
 Its scooped way down twixt many a mossy block!—
 But now the highest point is gained, before
 No point to pass, no higher peak to mock.

CCCXXIII.

Large shadows lying on a lovely Sea
 Of Malachite and Sapphire, where below
 Are marked the long clouds floating to and fro,
 Like lazy Sea-birds moving lazily.—
 The waves are glass from where we look, and free
 From any move, and, neath the golden glow
 Of the long Sun across the Bay, we know
 The distant shore seen indescribably ;
 And thro the haze the far off white-built Town,
 Mixed with the clouds and waters, like the Race
 Old Legends name, with City long sunk down,
 Seen clear no more of any mortal face,
 That old Atlantis that the sea-waves brown
 Took to their bosom for a resting place.

CCCXXIV.

Were Life all Summer, well it were to lie
As we are lying here today, and drink,
Too careless e'en for thought, or thought to think,
The scented breezes that go lazy by ;
And neither live and neither fear to die,
Nor hear the iron cable, link by link,
Dragged ever down, nor feel the anchor sink,
And scarcely know a life of "He" or "I."
But simply know that waters wax and wane,
Wave follows wave upon or from the shore ;
That what has been must surely be again,
And the Sun rise, and night and day go o'er ;
And feel the streams that flow, flow on in vain,
For one Sea takes and holds them evermore.

CCCXXV.

A foolish dream, and broken by the crash
Of thunder in ourselves at mind like this.—
Yea, fate is broken by the sudden hiss
Of thought's keen lightnings ; as, at the stone's splash
From some high cliff, the frightened Sea-fowl dash
A-sea, we leap away from fate that is,
But is not ; for none the conclusion miss
Of working Law, and some great Person's flash
Of keen eyes thro all things ; for, tho some Soul
May train itself against itself's belief,
The great world round us, taken as a whole,
Must die or worship for the heart's relief,
Gold Idol, or Mud Image, or Him, our goal
Of highest hope, who died twixt thief and thief.

CCCXXVI.

There is a bitter irony in Time!—
 Down drops its iron hand upon the glass
 Of happy moments here, that break, alas,
 Into a thousand fragments, and the chime
 Of fairy bells is hushed, and all their rhyme;
 For none can snatch the pieces, fit and class
 Them once again together, bring to pass
 The old shapes back, whose splinters, as we climb,
 Cut over keenly, wound our hands and feet:—
 Somehow the Past leaps ever up to sting
 The Present bitterly, yet ere they meet,
 Than the Past's plumes or than the Present's wing,
 A Somewhat flaps above with mightier beat,—
 Some larger pennoned, more mysterious Thing.

CCCXXVII.

O Sorrow first born of the Sons of Death!—
 Most strong and steadfast, tho thy trembling frame
 Would point to weakness and a woman-name
 As more befitting thee.—Who rendereth
 Himself accounted up, of whom one saith,
 Thou art unknown? Tho thou alone may'st claim,
 Perchance, to have viewed the torture when it came,
 Thou only to have heard the short and sobbing breath,
 When, in the watches of the night, your feet
 Steal silent to the bed, and your chill hand
 Is laid upon the heart that fears to beat,
 As with the other beaconing, you command
 Pale forms to mock us, who no more can meet,
 Till we, too, make that silent Shadow-Land.—

CCCXXVIII.

Pale King and High Priest of the human heart,
Whose worshipper is every Child of Time,
Who holdest sway o'er every age and clime,
Of dreadful face but gentle hand thou art:
And many a lip that first hath cried "Depart"
Presses thy hand beneath the wide sublime
Of thy large wings.—Yet, in this little climb
Of Life, Death aye draws near with bitter smart;
Who lose some Loved-one on this Shore or that,
Little to them is pomp, and pride, and state,
Who take no note of Sun, or Stars, or at
Eve's larger Lamp that marks the moments late,
Mourning like those that with the Patriarch sat
And spake no word because his grief was great.

CCCXXIX.

Tears in the night, and in the morning tears;
A Form that follows us throughout the day,
That, as we turn upon it, melts away;
And a heart full of phantom thoughts and fears;
And thoughts of life that darken all our years;
And gloomy clouds about us, that no ray
Can pierce or gild; and every path we stray
Full of an awful solitude that nears,
And nears, and nears, but never draws anigh;
Voices that seem to greet us, but whose sound
We cannot fix and capture; and a sigh
That fills the winds, and rises from the ground,
And shakes the light leaves as it wanders by,
And is not heard, and yet is all around.

CCCXXX.

Yet wherefore Sorrow but that Sweet may be
 More sweet for bitter moments that are sped,
 And all our heavy mourning for the Dead
 That we may meet again more joyfully !—
 The ebbing tide that slips away to sea
 Mourns round the sea shore thro the tangles red,
 Neath the low sky that reddens overhead,
 Watching the waste of waves despairingly ;
 But the long hours bring the returning flow
 O'er crimsoned with the first faint flushes born
 That streak the East, and in that rising glow
 We see the message of our later Dawn,
 To flood our present weary come and go
 Of things here with its everlasting morn.

CCCXXXI.

Ah, sweet is Sorrow as the sound of laugh,
 Or Viol, or Tabret, or the Pipe of Bird !
 For, when is passed the music that was heard,
 Dissatisfaction takes us with the chaff
 Of empty longings, seeing the better half,
 The golden grain, ungarnered, and deferred
 To other harvest.—Like that silly Herd
 Who danced and played before the Golden Calf,
 Till ground to powder was their hearts' desire,
 And mixed and drunken in the stream that ran
 Beside their feet, thou wilt find pleasure a fire,
 If taken alone into thy lap, O Man,—
 It is a twofold thread that leads us higher,
 Both Joy and Sorrow weave our present plan !

CCCXXXII.

Earth is not all for Sorrow or for Bliss,
But Earth points, ever perfect in its aim
And striving, up unto that Sphere, whose claim
Is perfect Joy, unbroke, or marred like this
Of Earth, whose mad waves ever coil and hiss
Around the shore, and from the sea whose name
Is Disappointment, and whose rocks are Shame
And Self-Despair ; where many a barque, I wis,
Sinks shattered thro the fleecy hopeless surge,
After short voyage o'er that Summer Sea.—
The paths of Grief and Joy do not diverge,
But Grief at last runs into Joy, to be
Lost there for ever, never to emerge
With separate being thro Eternity.

CCCXXXIII.

Our life is twofold in us ; Life and Death
Go walking twofold in us, hand in hand,
In life, in death : hard by a stream we stand
Stretching across, where neath us slumbereth
The silver thread that parts the banks from breath
Dream mixed with kindred breath ; that mighty Band,
The Living and the Dead, on either hand
Walk on together : as the Maids of Heth
Rebekah feared, some fear to meet and mate
A moment here with those that, from that shore,
Return to bless us, ere the golden gate
Close round their memory for evermore,
Return to bless us, ere it be too late,
Across the River we stand looking o'er.

CCCXXXIV.

Are they not oft about us?—With our eyes
 Have we not countered Spirit!—With our hands
 Felt the soft fingers from those lovelier Lands
 Whose dim blue hill peaks here before us rise!—
 Has no wind blown about us with the sighs
 Of those now speechless, as to one who stands
 And hears the sea waves sobbing on the sands,
 And from the inland all Earth's soft replies,
 But in a language none can read or mark,
 Yet full of import to him none the less!—
 The tree leaves have their song, as has the lark;
 But one may sing aloud without transgress;
 The others only whisper in the dark,
 With all their branches lifted up to bless.

CCCXXXV.

If life were living only, and an end
 Came to the flame that lacked the oil to burn,
 And here we laboured very hard to earn
 The pittance none would e'er have time to spend!—
 If hand grasped hand, and lip to lip cried “Friend,”
 Only for Earth's few years, and in the urn
 The sorry dust, the sickened Senses spurn,
 Were all of us!—Hence there are those that lend
 Their presence here to guide and cheer aright
 Our footsteps thro the foglands of this clay
 That closes round us, lest our sharpened sight
 Foreclosed on Earth our any longer stay:—
 And why the shadows of the darkest night
 But for the promise of a glorious Day!

CCCXXXVI.

O grand Republic of the silent Dead,
Whose white sheet shrouds, like snow flakes, fleck the
Plain,
That last of lies, "They shall not live again."
Ye answer ; ever pointing to the red
Of each Earth's Sunset, and then overhead
To each Earth's Sunrise, that is not in vain,
But set a symbol whereby men may gain
An answer to the hope that chokes the Dread
And its cold fingers from the throat of man !—
The word "No more" is not of us !—O Light,
Break on our darkness, and the darkened plan
Of this World's working, whereby from our sight
Things are half hidden ; save that they began
In good, and therefore they must end aright !—

CCCXXXVII.

Hopes in the heart are but the sign that Hope
Will get good answer and fulfilment, when
The world has borne its settled score of men ;
When the long years spin out the coiling rope
Of finished time, and further flight and scope
Is over past, no more to rise agen.—
The Darkness greys, pales out, and then,—and then,—
Bursting from gloomy nave to highest cope,
The white light of the Future blazes out
And floods and fills with radiance all the gloom ;
And, tho unawakened up of trump and shout,
The Bride lies waiting for the coming Groom,
Bright flashes leap and quiver round about
From twixt the slabs and corners of the Tomb.

CCCXXXVIII.

Over my eyelids spreads the shade of Death,
 My Soul is weary of my life at times ;
 More weary grown the higher that it climbs,
 Poor Traveller, toiling on with shortened breath
 Up that short steep ascent that sundereth
 A Death from Death ! Because our Birthday chimes
 Do toll our death from glory, and Earth begrimes
 Our newborn Days as that last Hour, that saith,
 “Dust unto dust.”—But O the Vale of Tears
 Is o'er and passed, when that last word is said ;
 And all the struggle with the strifeful years,
 And all the cares and needs of daily bread ;
 And free alone of labour, pain, and fears,
 Are those who lightly slumber with the Dead !—

CCCXXXIX.

Death is so Godlike, shaking flat the wall
 Raised up twixt Man and Man, and Race and Race ;
 There are no Countries in his Dwelling-place,
 But one vast Brotherhood he claims for all :
 Not that his Empire has no great and small,
 But littleness or greatness, shame or grace,
 Each owes to his own action, face to face
 Standing with what he did, or ere let fall
 From lips that now cannot deny their own
 Called up again from all the long forgot ;
 For no things perish that have ever known
 Being in the Past, whose life no Power can blot ;
 And comes that awful moment when alone
 Each has to face his words and deeds and thought.

CCCXL.

Not ours, not England's ! Nay, but truest ours
Who died today, where, watching every breath
While still life was, now mourning for his death,
Our Daughter Country sits : and the sweet flowers
Of deathless Song laid round him, and all Powers
Of gentle melody show who sundereth
That life from life parts vainly ; as one saith,
Where is thy Victory, grim King ? The towers
And temples of the flesh you sack in vain,
Bless and make full the aching heart from
dearth ;—
The Spirit of the Past must aye remain,
Fulfil its kindly presence on the Earth ;
He only died that he might live again
On children's lips by home and firelit hearth !—

CCCXLI.

So, should we mourn thee, the poor Human tears
Perforce from weakness more than grief must flow ?
Nay, rather, in thine own words, Longfellow,
"With what a glory come and go the years."
Let us lift up the curtain of our fears,
And, having known the first, so surely know
The light of thy return, wherein you go
From gold to what more golden gold appears !—
Thou in the Past hast felt the angel wing
Brush softly by and hover over thee ;
Some Friend of old did this last summons bring :—
Now thou hast learnt the "Secret of the sea" :
And who sang well the "Psalm of Life" will sing
A sweeter Psalm thro that new life to be !

CCCXLII.

New Life?—And when some five foot under ground
 The Body lies, the Spirit springs, forsooth,
 To grasp another larger lease of Youth,
 And, like a Butterfly, disport around!—
 Nay, that new life was in us when we found
 Our earliest consciousness of being and ruth
 For things, or ever fell the grim uncouth
 Clods on the coffin lid with hollow sound.
 That Soul is in us here today, and some
 Can in the Spirit leave the clay and pass
 Away, as easy as the go and come
 Of the swift sunbeams thro the glittering glass,
 Glow thro all things, but, aye returning Home,
 Are forced to join the clay once more, alas!

CCCXLIII.

It comes, it comes! Half loss of consciousness,
 And the still air grown full of whisperings,
 A sense of struggle as the Body clings
 Against the swift departing Soul's digress;—
 A loss of memory that would clear express;—
 Save of dim worlds and undefinable Things,
 And the soft air fanned faintly by large wings,
 And Shapes that near, rise up, grow less and less,
 And fade away into the dim Beyond;—
 Fair flowers that spring and wither and rebreak
 Into their olden glory; fancies fond
 Made here again that Earth did once unmake;
 Dim Shades about the shores, whose looks
 despond;—
 The Moonbeams lying lightly on the Lake.

CCCXLIV.

O such a sense of distance, such a sweep
Thro leagues and centuries upon my way !
Behind the closing Night, and distant Day
Opening wide out upon a further Deep :
About my feet strange creatures seemed to creep ;
And round my head bright Beings seemed to play :
The kindly light in every flashing ray
Made strong the heart, wiped eyes that fain would weep.—
A call, a grasp, a struggle, and again
The sense of fear, the grasp of flesh around
That sucked the Spirit into it with pain,
And in its substance all the Higher drowned.—
A prisoned Soul that beat its bars in vain,
A troubled Body rising from the ground.

CCCXLV.

There are strange hours in our experiences
That make us feel the grasp upon our hands
Of mightier Messengers from other Lands,
With power more potent far than aught of these :
They bend our necks, and bring us to our knees :
'Tis little that I 'd give for him, who stands
Full-face with the Unknown, and then demands
Not prayer, but logic from the winds and Seas.—
I hold His finger here who missioned forth
The myriad Spheres that sing His praise betimes ;
Who blots some vaster world out in His wrath ;
And guides the delicate creeper as it climbs ;
Who paints with crimson fires the frozen North ;
And writes the rippling streamlet's thousand
rhymes.

CCCXLVI.

As Frost makes marble all the misty air,
 Congeals the vapour into form and fact,
 Changes to rock the tumbling cataract,
 His Word, all working, breathing everywhere,
 From senseless nothing doth create the fair
 Green fields about us, and the hills compact,
 The rolling sea by the long coast line backed,
 And all that is, or ever wandered there.—
 'Tis but His Presence makes Earth liveable,
 Knowing thereby all pain and villainy
 Must end for it began : if, as they tell,
 This is the culminate that came to be
 After long years of change that worked out well,
 God help us all to perish speedily !—

CCCXLVII.

If this is not a fallen, ruined Sphere,
 With Buddha, let us strive annihilate,
 Abolish, and burn out this wretched state
 That, Vulture-like, gnaws at our vitals here.—
 If our light's shining of itself is clear,
 Dash out that light upon the rocks, that wait
 Hungry beneath the cliffs for prey, when late
 The low tide moans out, drawing ever near !—
 Our lightest light is darkness, wherefore then
 We can take hope and look, where, far away,
 Half hidden from the eyes of many men,
 The crimson gives the promise of the day ;—
 'Twas blood shed in the East restored agen
 The wedding garment guilt had snatched away.—

CCCXLVIII.

He fills up Space with His white light, and here
 This prism world rays out the infinite
 To meet our eye, in leaf or crysolite,
Tree, ancient rock, or yellow budding ear
Of corn in Summer, or by tide-plashed pier
 Of blue spread Bay or Sea-bird haunted Bight.—
 For ever pure and stainless is His white,
And baths in life Creation far and near,
 Tho the touch is pollution, and the stream
 Shows now a hundred colours for the one
 That left its distant shore of crystal gleam,
 Unsoiled, untainted, missioned from the Sun ;
A visible expression of the dream
 Of God, in waking hours that is undone.

CCCXLIX.

Nay, hold ! There is a Father's thought in it
 For His weak children.—Who could meet the blaze
 Of that light's pureness in our mortal days,
If its grand lightnings were not staid and split
By all the world about us ; where we sit
 Beneath the shade, or thrid the open ways
 With thought above our thought, that thro the maze
Guides each one here, a grasp some feel no whit,
 But who within it wander none the less.
 Take our tinged light away, and we are lost,
 The seen Sun bringing blindness, from the stress
 Upon our eyeballs ; as that vision crossed
 The Man of Tarsus, when in speechlessness
 His feared Folk stood, and heard the Voice
 accost.—

CCCL.

The only God that we can worship yet
 Is God who hides Himself in stream and tree,
 Who took upon Him our Humanity
 To veil His light ; for never man's eyes met
 His awful Presence, that, behind the wet
 And pitiful eyes of Christ, saw piteously
 The world roll blindly thro the senseless Sea
 Of Space, and stooped to plant the Violet
 Of tender hope upon the barren Plain,
 The torn and bleeding feet of man marked red ;
 When He who made, and He who suffered pain
 Grew one, and, in that mystic union wed,
 The stricken Victor lived and rose again,
 Life found her highest triumph in the Dead !—

CCCLI.

We are the Children of the deeds we do,
 And suffer for the actions of our Sires ;
 Our acts are not burnt up of any fires,
 But mother us, and grasp and drag us thro
 The future always ; we are moulded to
 The curve and trend of our life's facts ; the mires
 That we have made, take us ; and we are buyers
 At stores that we have stored with gall and yew.—
 All things I see together work for good,
 But only thus for Goodness do they work ;
 For all things work for ill to Ill, and should
 They falter from the bitter end, and shirk
 The awful final, in the doubtful mood,
 God's hand would move obscurely thro the mirk.

CCCLII.

This atom World becomes Immensity
In its revealing of the higher Law,
With us, as in Capella, without flaw
Is shown its universal unity :—
The God there works as here with you and me ;
Even from a single Spirit one can draw
The whole Code up ; who falls, falls downward, for
All things here ever tend undoubtedly
To final permanence of Good or Ill,
Such is the Ultimate Free-Will brings in dower :
Here every slip scars an invisible
Sad something on our Soul, a higher Power
May wash out in an instant, but that will,
For all *our* efforts, deepen every hour.

CCCLIII.

As the tree falls ;—it is a fearful thought
The Knowledge sure that every character
Tends to a fixed end, and I aver
With boldness, nothing other can be taught
By Science here : for each one that is brought
Into the world there is one chance ; defer
The work of Youth to Manhood, and demur—
No second set of early years are caught.—
One chance, one chance, and in the nature of things
It comes but once, that final permanence ;
'Tis only here, I feel, that Angels' wings
Are hovering round with will to bear us hence ;
He gains, who to his Sin eternal clings,
Eternal Punishment for recompense.

CCCLIV.

If God be God, and Love, how is it Sin
 Shall last for ever,—and, O Wise, you say,
 If He be God, it shall not last alway !
 Answer me, Wise, how did it e'er begin ?—
 I see no wonder it should last ; but in
 The wonder of its rise I see display
 Of Mysteries too deep for our small day
 Of darkened knowledge. May be, we shall win
 An answer from some other Sphere than this ;
 But here I can but shut my eyes, and cry,
 “I know no more than that it is, it is,
 And was what brought the Godhead down to
 die.”—
 Ah, all too awful was that death of His,
 If not more awful Sin’s reality !—

CCCLV.

I know that many a prayer goes up to God,
 Like incense thro the clear blue sky, and fills
 The Vast with almost too proud hope, that stills
 The trembling flowers that whisper to the sod,
 With heads bent humbly, for they see the rod
 Is in His hand, and fire that blasts and kills
 As well as gentle dews and fresh’ning rills,
 And rains with quickening life for every clod.
 I know that Mercy ever standeth there
 With pity for poor man, and eyelids wet,
 But only for the humble, who scarce dare
 Draw near His feet ; and I cannot forget,
 How, eighteen hundred years ago, a prayer
 Was prayed in agony and bloody sweat.—

CCCLVI.

O Infinite Perfection ! Personal Love !
Most Holy One ! Redeemer, King, and Lord !
One only God ! One only Being adored
Beneath us, round us, everywhere above !
The Lamb, the Lion, Eagle, and the Dove
Are written on Thy banners blown abroad—
Whom all the Ages worship only God,
Who dost, the Life, thro all Creation move !
Beyond the furtherest sweep of Sun or Star,—
Nearer than hand to hand and face to face,—
Nearer Thou art than Spouse and Spoused are,
Whose finger is the hope where clings our Race,—
More near than Life and Death, and yet more far
Than all the Systems circling on in Space !—

CCCLVII.

That Thou art God we know and feel, and fall
Before Thee, praising Thee that we may praise :—
O Thou who wert before the flight of days,
Who stoopest to hear Thy children as they call,
How little we thank Thee who art all in all !—
Blinded are we before Thy flashing rays,
Yet 'tis Thy wing that covers us, and stays
Their fierceness lest they should our hope appal.
My darkened chamber holds Thee when I sleep,
Who fillest all worlds the instant I awake ;
The furtherest flight of Thought is not so deep
That from Thy Presence it can plunge and break ;
And when my Soul would to Thy footstool creep,
Thou liftest it up, the promised throne to make !—

CCCLVIII.

Sweep back, O Lord, the darkness, and make clear
 The white light of the Future to our eyes,
 Smite the dull clouds, and bid the Sun arise
 Upon the day the Ages bring more near !
 For Time grows ever wearier year by year,
 With slow foot dragging on the agonies
 And all the hopes the circling centuries
 Bear on their shoulders. Never falls a tear
 Upon their path, for, in their great despair,
 Their hearts are withered and their lids are dry ;
 They only see the Future waiting there,
 They only feel the Present passing by,
 They only see the Past, with matted hair,
 Wild eyed, look back upon them bitterly.

CCCLIX.

Ah, strange the sweep of Time upon his course
 Of unimagined Ages ! Round his feet
 The Past, the Present, and the Future meet.—
 The Future, held in like a restive Horse ;—
 The Past, dim seen, like a far river-source,
 With all its pools that wander down and cheat
 The eye behind the sudden cliffs, or fleet
 Fade far away beyond recall or force ;—
 The Present lies about us like a plain,
 With shifting red sand pillared by the wind,
 To cloud the horizon, so that we in vain
 Attempt to see the further path defined,
 And only feel in forward toil and strain
 The sense of something closing in behind.

CCCLX.

Here is made foolish all experience :—

We prophet out the Past, but on our ear

There falls no whisper ever to make clear
The Present waiting for the answer whence.—
Silence itself hath lost its eloquence.—

The scroll of Time was never read by Seer,
For, tho the eyes behold, the white lips here
Possess no power to utter out the sense :

And, limitless and lost without expression,

Mind, over full, moves onward, ranging far
With infinite thought thro infinite progression,

And never ending change, as Sun and Star
Arise and fade in infinite succession

O'er what may be, beyond what were, and are.

CCCLXI.

Four ever closing Seasons make our lives :—

Complete and round for Life the full-blown rose.

A Joy—a Hope—a Struggle—a Repose—

Perchance some delicate written leaf survives,
This all, no more : and he who toils and strives,

And he who takes the current as it flows,

And with the sunlit silver onward goes,

At the same final Port at last arrives.—

So have the Ages written, but, forsooth,

To all man's lie I hear God's truth respond,

To childhood as to age, to man and youth.

“That is not all ; look up, nor dare despond !”

Where this Land's lives are tested by their truth,

If truth be true, there is a life beyond !—

CCCLXII.

O flowery-fingered, sweet soft-scented Spring
 Of budding bosom, from the lap of Earth
 Thou leapest up laughing, from thine hour of birth
 Singing because thou canst not help but sing !
 Full of the tribute that the young year doth fling
 About thy tripping footsteps, and the mirth
 Of merry birds about, and whom each hearth
 Welcomes with rush of young Folks out to bring
 Thee, joyful Captive, in with buds and leaves :—
 Empress of bubbling waters ! Queen of all !
 What thought is there in thee makes sad and grieves,
 Lady of Life, new streams, large loves and small?—
 O darkening skies, chill rains, and dripping eaves,
 And skeleton stalks whence the bright poppies
 fall !—

CCCLXIII.

O golden glories of the Summer-tide !
 O glory of the Sunshine on the hills !
 O glories of the silver lance-like rills,
 Whose Pools, like pennons waving far and wide,
 Catch many a myriad colours Rainbow-dyed,
 To think that ye are passing ! O the stills
 Of Summer's mid-day, when her presence fills
 The fainting woods with joy, and wonder-eyed
 The delicate blues of bell and floweret lie
 So still, no slightest breeze can steal a kiss,
 Nor move one tender petal wandering by,
 Nor break the dream, if dream indeed be this !—
 O rich warm grass in which 'twere sweet to die,
 Drowned out of life by utter blissfulness !—

CCCLXIV.

O Artist Autumn ! Painter bountiful
Of gold and purple, glorious, welcome ; wept
At your depart ! Had any longing kept
A gracious Presence, you had stayed to rule
My love and heart forever ! O the cool
Long Autumn evenings, when the sea-waves crept
Against my feet, against the shore that slept
Neath a charmed Moon that lay on lake and pool,
Stilled neath its silver ! And from bay to bay
The Curlews passed, or, with the Gulls and Geese,
Stayed on the Skerries from their further way
Across the sea—soft like a dew-starred fleece—
Where, wake, but quiet, in that after day,
The Land lay lovely in the lap of Peace.

CCCLXV.

Winter, in wedding veil of peerless white
Laid o'er with lovely work of frosted lace,
Hides from our sight the wonder of her face,
And waits and watches thro the star-lit night,
In silent patience till the time be right,
For her strong Groom the Summer ; all the space
Of blue about her breathless, till his grace
And glory lap the Land in deep delight.—
Winged from the South he draws near tenderly,
She blushes o'er and stirs that slumbereth ;
Opening her lips to whisper, “ It is he,”
She dies away beneath his soft warm breath.—
Like the Bride Winter in our lives are we,
The Bridegroom comes—but first there cometh
Death !

APPENDIX TO "A YEAR OF LIFE."

VII.

"Stacks" (1).

Solitary cliffs separated from the Mainland.

"Sinians" (2).

Deep sea-caves communicating inland with the surface.

XIII.

"Trace back one element" (3).

Materialism *must* involve the application of evolution to the simplest and most primitive forms of matter and force in the whole organic world. The fact of matter having become, from a simple primal condition, developed into that state of permanent difference which characterizes the chemical elements, *must* be shown, or materialism has no foundation. This has *never* been shown. Nor does chemistry allow it. It militates entirely against any theory of chemical evolution.

XV.

"Only Automata of single nerve" (4).

Plants and many animals possess only the automatic arcs. Such organizations are, in the strict sense of the word, only automata. The Bee has not the influential arc ; it has only the automatic nerves. Accordingly, by instinct it has built its cell in the same way age after age. Two Bees, under precisely the same circumstances, will do precisely the same things.

XVI.

“All, every particle,” &c. (5).

Once in seven years we have a new body, the books used to say: once in twelve months, as they say now, the particles of our physical system are changed.

XXIX.

“Ere protoplast was in the fiery star dust” (6).

(a) Life is incompatible with the gaseous state or the state of fused metals.

(b) Our present knowledge justifies the conclusion, that probably two hundred millions, and *certainly* five hundred millions, of years ago, the earth and the sun were in a fused state.

(c) Neither two hundred nor five hundred millions of years are enough to account for the formation of plants and animals from primordial cells on the theory of the Darwinian transmutation. (Cf. HÄCKEL, *History of Creation*, chap. xxiv. Also LYELL, *Geology*, vol. I, pp. 234, 235. DANA, *Geology*, Ed. of 1875, p. 591. DARWIN, *Origin of Species*, p. 286.) For the keenest and most incisive reasoning upon this argument, for the whole subject held up to the sunlight in the grasp of one whose mind I believe to be the widest and most powerful of the century, see *Biology*, JOSEPH COOK, English Edition (Hodder & Stoughton), p. 45. I may here add my humble stone to the cairn that every year increases in the honour of that great intellect. I have often heard men laugh at Mr. Cook, but never have I found men daring enough to enter the lists of argument against him.—The reason is not far to seek, but it is perhaps a pity so; for a battle between the giant and one of the numerous philosophic pygmies about us would be a most amusing intellectual comedy, tho' perhaps the serious issues involved might make a spectator more sad than scornful to view the onslaught of the ambitious atom.

XXXV.

“What span of knowledge knows organic change” (7).

If Evolution has ever reigned absolutely, it must be still reigning, for we know that in all her processes Nature is uniform. But the smallest *organic* change has never been detected anywhere, either accomplished or in course of progress. The eye, for instance, of the earliest known creature is identical, as far as we can see, with that of today. Man, for thousands of years, has been trying to fly, to see in the dark, to breathe in the water, but he does not seem any nearer the attainment of these conveniences than when he started. There are yet no signs of wings, gills, or of that pupil peculiar to owls and cats. Man was not developed from the first living thing of earth, but in it, indeed, that Protoplasm bore the promise of the man that was to be, even as present man has in his being assurance of a higher creature yet to come.

“The Grange and Palace,” &c. (8).

“There is scarce an architectural ornament of the Gothic or Grecian styles which may not be found existing as fossils in the rocks. The Ulodendron was sculptured into gracefully arranged rows of pointed and closely imbricated leaves, similar to those into which the Roman architects fretted the torus of the Corinthian order. The Sigillaria were fluted columns ornately carved in the line of the channelled flutes; the Lepidodendra bore, according to their species, sculptured scales, or lozenges, or egg-like hollows, set in a sort of frame, and relieved into knobs and furrows; all of them furnishing examples of a delicate diaper-work, like that so admired in our more ornate Gothic buildings, such as Westminster Abbey, or Canterbury and Chichester Cathedrals, only greatly more exquisite in their design and finish.”—**HUGH MILLER, *Testimony of the Rocks*, Forty-fourth thousand, p. 216.**

XXXVI.

“To class, arrange, point out,” &c. (9).

Many Sciences, as, for instance, that of Astronomy, would seem to have almost attained their Human limits.—Classification, more than discovery, appears to be the work of today.

L.

“Organic, inorganic” (10).

“There is no parallel between the actions of matter in the mineral world and in living tissues.”—PROFESSOR HUXLEY, *Encyc. Brit.*

“A deep abyss separates the inorganic from the organic, the inanimate from the animate. The rock-crystal on the one side, vegetable and animal on the other: how infinitely different the image! Is it, then, possible to bridge over this gulf? We answer, Not at the present time.”

* * * * *

“Schwann, the founder of modern histology, taught what the crystal is in regard to the inorganic, that the cell is in the sphere of life. As the former shoots from the mother lye, so, also, in a suitable animal fluid, are developed the constituents of the cell, nucleolus, nucleus, covering, and cell contents. *This view was embraced during many years, it explained everything so conveniently. This was, however, over-hasty.* The cell arises from the cell. *A spontaneous origin does not occur.*”—FREY, PROFESSOR HEINRICH, *Compendium of Histology.* Twenty-four lectures. Trans. by Dr. G. R. Cutter. New York: Putnam's Sons, 1876, pp. 1—14. Quoted by Joseph Cook: *Biology*, p. 123.

“We believe that the proper shaping, arrangement, and function of these elementary parts, is not a process identical or analogous to crystallization taking place through merely physical laws, but that there is a presiding agency which controls such arrangement to a definite end.”—TYSON, Dr. JAMES, *The Cell Doctrine*, pp. 112, 113. Lindsay & Blackiston, 1870.

LIV.

“All Nature’s forces here are uniform” (11).

In reasoning on spontaneous generation we are in the field of simple physical forces. Here are just the influences that brought into existence our mountains and seas, and determined events in the inorganic world. According to all established science, these forces have been uniform. The Uniformitarian Hypothesis turns on the idea that uniformity exists in the forces of the inorganic world. We must therefore *insist*, that, if spontaneous generation does not occur now, it never occurred. We must do this in the name of the uniformity of Nature.

LIX.

“The powerlessness of Nature to create from her machines” (12).

“If there has been an evolution, there must have been an Evolver.”—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

“Faith in an order, which is the basis of Science, cannot reasonably be separated from faith in an Ordainer, which is the basis of religion.”—ASA GRAY.

“The law of development explains much, but not itself.”—JOSEPH COOK.

“This seems to me to be as sure a teaching of science as the law of gravitation, that life proceeds from life, and nothing but life.”—SIR WILLIAM THOMSON.

“Reason rejects all ‘mays’ and ‘might have beens’” (13).

“Who can tell what *may have* occurred in a cooling Planet?”—STRAUSS, *Old Faith and New*.

“Who will set limits to the *possible* play of molecules in a cooling Planet?”—PROFESSOR TYNDALL, *Fragments of Science*.

LX.

“Over Life there stands Intention shadowing all” (14).

“I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before Him. That which hath

been is now ; and that which is to be hath already been : and God requireth that which is past."—*ECCLESIASTES* iii. 14, 15.

"If everything is governed by Law, and if all the power is in the physical universe that ever was there, where is God? *In the intention.*"—PROFESSOR BENJAMIN PIERCE.

"The Teleologist can always defy the Evolutionist to disprove that the primordial molecular arrangement was not intended to evolve the phenomena of the universe."—PROFESSOR T. H. HUXLEY.

"Bigot Schools" (15).

To me a school of thought seems bigoted, which, rather than give up some pet theory, or confess defeat upon the plain field of argument, is willing to change axioms and definitions, and escape the encounter by evasion of difficulties that a manly straight-forwardness would confess unfaceable.

"Mental and bodily states are utterly contrasted ; and our mental experience, our feelings and thoughts, have no *extension*, no *place*, no *form* or *outline*, no *mechanical division of parts*, and we are incapable of attending to anything mental until we shut off the view of all that."—PROFESSOR ALEX. BAIN, *Mind and Body*, pp. 124—135.

"*EXTENSION* is but the first of a long series of properties *all present in matter, all absent in mind*. *INERTIA* cannot belong to a pleasure, a pain, an idea, as experienced in the consciousness. *Inertia* is accompanied with *GRAVITY*, a peculiarly material quality. So *COLOUR* is a truly material property : it cannot attach to a feeling, properly so called, a pleasure, or a pain. These three properties are the basis of matter ; to them are superadded *Form*, *Motion*, *Position*, and a host of other properties expressed in terms of these, *Attractions* and *Repulsions*, *Hardness* and *Elasticity*, *Cohesion*, *Crystallization*. *Mental* states and bodily states cannot be compared."—*Ibid.* pp. 125—135.

"The arguments for the two Substances (mind and matter) have, we (?) believe, now entirely lost their validity. The one substance with two sets of properties, two sides—the

physical and the mental,—a double-faced unity, would appear to comply with all the exigencies of the case.”—*Ibid.* p. 196.

To me and, I daresay, to others equally fond, this cheerful view of things,—which in fact equalizes the imaginative act of inspiration that gave us Job and Isaiah, and, to come lower, Hamlet and Macbeth, with the last output of some Manchester cotton mill,—brings with it that good old objection, that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time and in the same sense.

“If matter is a double-faced Unity, having a spiritual and a physical side, there must co-inhere, in one and the same substratum, extension and the absence of extension, inertia and the absence of inertia, colour and the absence of colour, form and the absence of form. To assert that these fundamentally antagonistic qualities of matter and mind not only inhere, but co-inhere, in one and the same substratum, is to assert that a thing can be and not be at the same time and in the same sense. This limitless self-contradiction wrecks in this age, as it has wrecked in every age, the pretence that there is but one substance in the Universe.”—JOSEPH COOK, *Biology*, pp. 184, 185.

LXX.

“*That mighty mind*” (16).

“They who forsake the nature of things, or axiomatic first truths, will not and cannot find anything surer on which to build.”—ARISTOTLE.

Socrates dared not look long on the nature of things for fear lest his eyes should be dazzled.

LXXI.

“*These truths*” (17).

The Intuitions: truths self-evident, necessary, and universal. They are propositions having these three traits,—self-evidence, necessity, and universality.

For instance: *A whole is greater than a part. Equals of equals are equal to one another. It is impossible to pass from one point to another without traversing the intervening space. The shortest distance between two points is a straight line.*

CIX.

"The King's Music" (18).

This beautiful idea, *i.e.*, the thought of childhood, that from Hill and Valley, Sea and Shore, go up the several parts in some grand orchestra, "The King's Band," was the expression of a child to my Friend, H. E. Boulton. I may here, for lack of other opportunity, say what little I am able, add what mite of praise I can to that effort, Quixotic it may be, in which he, and others, I have the honour to reckon among my Friends, are leaders, that would raise part at least of our Boyhood back to what is high and noble, train body and mind alike to all fair things, and seek earnestly from the first to guard the young from those unreportable temptations that have beset all of us comrades from our Public Schools.

CXIII.

"The very Scorpion and her young" (19).

I can hardly call it a beautiful sight, nor indeed is it a grotesque one, for it has in it much tenderness, tho to ourselves withal much that is repulsive. The little Scorpions stick by their mother till they are quite able to take care of themselves, swarming over her like young opossums, and being jealously protected and guarded by a natural tenderness as strange as it is uncommon in the insect world, for, with few exceptions, *non-gregarious* insects, if I may use the term, seem to have to take care of themselves *ab ovo*. A Scorpion's sting, say the Natives, when she has her young, is more venomous and painful than at any other time.—Scorpions are queer creatures, as appear most other living things when they are made for awhile the subject of careful observation. A Scorpion ringed round with acid, after vainly attempting to pass the deadly belt, will kill itself. If you put one under a tumbler and keep it covered up for some time in black darkness, on taking it out into the full blaze of tropic day and suddenly exposing it to the light it will go mad and sting itself to death. The why or the wherefore of these facts I know not, but I know facts almost as strange of many tropical insects. Neither of these experiments, however, did I make myself, deeming them too cruel.

CXXXI.

"With that which comes up" (20).

In parts of India you *hear* the evening coming up to you from over-sea. I have often heard it. It is a fact, strange contradiction as it may seem, that we can hear silence.

CXCV.

"Deum hic rursus testem" (21).

"Deum hic rursus testem in vocem me his omnibus in locis
ubi tum multa licent, ab omni flaquitio ac probro, integrum
atque intactum vixisse, illud perpetuo cogitantem si hominum
latere oculos possem, Dei certe non posse."—JOHN MILTON.

CCKV.

"That lying Power who swears and breaks her bond" (22).

Events are not so long passed over that we have forgotten a certain solemn compact entered into by Russia with her right hand, while with her left on our Northern Indian Frontier, she gave it the lie. The particulars are a matter of contemporary history.

CCXVIII.

"The evening brings the news the morning wrote," &c. (23).

Strangely enough, the stanza ccxvii. was written on the morning of the day by the evening of which news of the assassination reached me in Scotland.

CCXXII.

"Braid and Buttons" (24).

About this time, in lieu of the pressing need of reform, the attention of the Government was taken up in the designing of a more Muscovite uniform for the Army.

CCXXXIX.

“Furious change must follow on the night” (25).

“With grave signs of agrarian troubles in several parts of the Empire, with an ever-increasing army of officials, with oppressive taxation, with annual deficits and new loans, with national credit strained almost to its limit, with a large and increasing revolutionary party which lays hold of the intellect of the country, and which cannot be kept down even by the severest methods of repression, it must be admitted that the outlook in Russian politics is a dark one. As to the issue of the perilous conflict between Czar and People, it requires but little political insight to predict that the present system in Russia cannot last. It would not be rash to add that it cannot last long.”—Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, M.P., in the *Fortnightly Review*, quoted in the *Times* of January 31st, 1883.

“* * * A Revolution in this Country, whatever may be its character, is inevitable and imminent.”—*Times*, Saturday, July 23rd, 1881.

And let it come : the sooner the better for all Europe, whose one disturbing element is the Northern Ulcer, throbbing ever thro its foul flesh and threatening constant overflow!—Russia in many ways is a noble nation ; for the Russian People I have much sympathy ; but for Russia as a Power, as a Factor in the forces of Europe, as a despotic Government, as the evil beast that tore and oppressed the ancient and harmless people that had made a many years’ home within its borders, I have nothing but the most bitter hatred and detestation. I know what the tone of her Press, the inspired Press, is towards us : the impotent insult that has been hurled upon England, her Rule and her Rulers ; and if I have written strongly, I think I have sufficient provocation.

It may interest some to know this fact, spoken from my certain knowledge, and not from hearsay, that Russia, for some years now, has simply made to cease one very considerable import from British India into Central Asia. See also Trade Report on Stoppage of Exports from British India into

Bochara, by Russia, since the death of the late Khan. Quoted in *Times* of October, 1881.

Looked at apart from all selfish considerations, merely on the score of Humanity, I think our eyes should be more open, and more upon Central Asia. There are many able and competent to speak upon this subject who have travelled thro the country, and who have seen the Peoples that Russia has since *blotted out*. I here insert a paragraph from the *Times* of today that bears me out in what I have said.—Comment is needless.

“ If the fine ladies and gentlemen who made so much of General Scobeleff, the chivalrous leader of Slave aspirations, during his visit to Paris, had known a little of the methods by which the ‘Butcher of Géok Tepé’ settled the Tekke difficulty in favour of his country, they would probably have been less anxious to introduce their Hero into the European complications which he was apparently so anxious to create. The true story of the massacre of Géok Tepé has not yet been fully told in Europe, or, if told, its purport has not been realized. The methods by which the Tekke campaign was conducted and concluded were indeed satisfactory, as far as the settlement of the question at issue between the offending Tribes and the Russian Government were concerned.—The Peace of Géok Tepé has even a more dreadful significance than the Peace of Warsaw. The controversy is at an end, for one of the disputants has ceased to exist.”—*The Times*, Wednesday, October 11th, 1882.

We are a strange Folk ! We petition the Home Secretary for some wretched murderer’s paltry sake : that a Clan or Nation should be extinguished we do not seem to care a jot. I know that O.K. (the Lady seems to wish her name unknown ; we will let the initials stand) thinks little of the *lives* of Jews or other Barbarians with whose blood her countrymen would wash their feet in their onward struggle to the West ; but I can tell them both that there is a Nation waiting there, who, Barbarians, may yet roll back the tide of Barbarism—aye, and with weight of war and wave of portentous size.

As for Russia in India!—What Hindoo who has ten annas to lose would think of joining a Pauper Power whose first act, were she left victor in the end, would be to annex nine of them? No! the Lion and the Bear are destined, I fear, to meet in desperate strife, but the real struggle will be in Syria and Asia Minor.

CCXXXIII.

“That Statesman” (26).

Nehemiah.

CCXXXVI.

“A wretched feudal lie” (27).

The creation of a bastard feudal aristocracy in a country that never had one, and did not want it, to facilitate and simplify the collection of revenue. The subject is too long and too deep to obscure in a short note to a Poem; but anyone who will take the trouble to read up the question of certain Land tenures in India will see the monstrous injustice that was frequently perpetrated.

CCXLV.

“Thy Daughter-Land” (28).

America.

CCXLVI.

“Diodotus” (29).

DIODOTUS, A.C. 427.

(Cf. THUCIDIDES, Bk. iii., ch. 41, 42.)

“This is the only place in History where Diodotus is mentioned.”—MITFORD.

CCXLIX.

"The orphan child" (30).

On slavery in South Africa I will not say much, but repeat what all know who know human nature and the facts of the case, that it *does* exist. This I affirm in spite of all protest from certain erratics, who probably have never been out of their own country in their lives, and know as little practically of what goes on in hotter-blooded Lands, as do their own shirt-fronts or door-knockers.

CCL.

"Prisoner butchered" (31).

Poor Elliot! A hero of my early boyhood, as I looked with childish wonder on his sketches, but in them saw nothing of that swollen river, that waggon forced into its rushing waters, the mad horses, and the half-score or so of murderers who brutally shot to death, with a dozen wounds thro the back, the helpless Prisoner, a sacred trust committed to their charge, and whose companion escaped only thro his courage, strength, and the darkness of that night, shameful forever to all manhood of a once noble Dutch descent. A murder approved of, and whose agents were acquitted almost with acclamation.

If I have written over-strongly upon the subject, it was because the ink in which my pen was dipped was blood, and with the vision of the same my eyes were full.

There is but one thing that will wash it out, and there is many a dark skin in South Africa who will do the washing on his own account when he gets that the years cannot keep from his hands—rifle and ammunition.

CCCXIX.

"Our Earth is never tremorless and still."

Along the Atlantic shores the long period tides alone may make the land rise up and down thro some five inches.—

The experimental determination of the lunar disturbance of gravity is out of our reach.

THE PRICE OF THE BISHOP.



No doubt you all of you know the Town
 Where the scene of the coming story is laid,
 With its two tall towers, like warders brown,
 Looking contentedly over the shade
 Flung by the lime trees about their feet,
 And their own long shadows that cross the street.

The ramparts, levelled this many a year
 To fill up the moat that circled round,
 The broad bright river, and quaint old pier,
 Where the water ever, with sluggish sound,
 Rubs its shoulders against the piles
 Ere it lazily makes for the distant isles.

Even the song-birds seem asleep
 In the woods about that queer old city,
 The ducks in the ditches green and deep
 Can scarce quack out their monotonous ditty,
 In the streets the beggars scarce trouble to beg,
 Above the storks solemnly stand on one leg.

You would think that since the World began
 All had been quiet and peaceful and still,
 But years ago a vile old man,
 The old Prince Bishop of wicked will,
 Made many a mother curse her birth
 And the place a veriest Hell on Earth.

The sacred name he seemed to bear,
 The stamp of authority which it brought,
 But made more deadly the hideous snare,
 The deceit and the sin of the deeds he wrought ;
 He lived by oppression among his brothers,
 His pleasure was deadly wrong to others.

The cry of the City went up in prayer
 Like incense mounting the deep blue Heaven,
 For the wrong that the People suffered there
 At the hands of the Prince and his wicked Seven ;
 And woe for the maid on whom, tripping past,
 The Bishop an eye of longing cast.—

What time when his reign on the Town lay sore
 There came to the place an Artisan,
 Who travelled, it seemed, to perfect his lore
 In the working of metals : a fair-haired man,
 Noble, blue-eyed, and before him dead
 Fell vice wrong frightened his presence fled.

So he abode in the Town and wrought
With one, a master-craftsman there,
And as days went by he was bitterly taught
The evil that was : a daughter fair
Had his artist-master; as brother he
Loved her, but she loved o'er sisterly.

The old man well would have seen him son,
Tho lately stranger ; and she—the rest
Could be seen in her heart, which held but one,
In the light of her eye, and her swelling breast :
The stranger as brother he loved her well,
But with more in his thought than their thought could
tell.

Till, sudden, he rose from his work one day ;—
He said, “I have seen, I have known, Adieu.
It is time ; I am called far away,
And not as I am I return to you :
When you see yon Height flame know my token !”
And was gone ere a word could be thought or spoken.—

Days rolled by : the maiden's beauty
Was bruited about, and all agreed
Of the youth, that to love her were simple duty,
A Fay, no child of the Earth indeed ;—
Her long hair rippled down to her feet,
In her eyes did the depths of waters meet.

A creature having the form of man,
 Otherwise not, told the Bishop, cloy
 With his past of pleasure, how Summer ran
 With never such news of so sweet a toy.—
 'Twas done, and the lowest hearts were stirred
 When gone was the beautiful innocent bird.

A whisper only ; for those were days
 When the People only could whisper wrong :
 And Justice seemed to have gone her ways
 To the wilds and woods, and vice was strong.—
 As for the Father, he was thrust
 In some worse than Hell, to a death unjust.

But he who had gone before this thing
 Returned to his People, a warlike Race,
 Whom he ruled as his Fathers had ruled, a King,
 But had left them awhile to spy the place :
 For aye at times his Northern Bands
 Swept like a tempest those Southern lands.

And gathered together, and girt for war,
 He found his people ; but ere he led
 His Nation forth, his warriors swore,
 By the holy steel with the Victims red,
 For the sake of her Sire, the sake of the Maid,
 To spare the Town where the King had stayed.

The Height was flaming, and far and near
The fire and foemen fiercely went,
But spared the City the King held dear,
And the People were filled with wonderment,
And glad in their hearts, ran rumour bold,
That the Bishop had bought them off with gold.

Till, death in his eyes, before their gates
The wild King stood, and behind his Bands,
Fearing themselves, as the forest waits,
Trembling, the tempest in Southern lands.—
Spake stern, “I have spared you thus far,” quoth he,
“Let your Priest and your Princes come forth to me !”

They came, and little it needs to tell
The terrible moments before his gloom,
The bitter despair of death and Hell,
In foretaste enduring the hideous doom,
And all its terrors before it came,
And conscience that seared them like a flame.

“Come forth from the City,” he cried, “each male,
Or old, or young, that is man, come forth !”
As seas are stilled to the coming gale
The People were stilled by the wild King’s wrath,
And hushed and silent, an awe-struck rout,
The men from the City straight came out.

“ Now bid the women to stand on the walls,
 With their Daughters, their Children, their Little-
 ones ! ”

Then, at his bidding, a Herald calls,
 “ Mothers of slaves, behold your Sons,
 And see the price all have to pay
 For their Bishop, that no one said him nay ! ”

Thereafter straight at the King’s command
 An axe was brought, a block placed in rest,
 And they struck off every man’s right hand
 And gashed a cross upon every breast.—
 Bring horses ; and limb from quivering limb
 They tore each Prince with a justice grim.

Then, sudden and stern, once more the King
 Made stop of wailing and end of strife.—
 “ I have taught you that there is a dearer thing
 Than the wretched thing that ye feared for,—life.
 No hand was raised for a blow at vice,
 So now for your Prelate you’ve paid my price.”

He ceased and turned, and his army went
 Away from that City of misery.
 And many have asked in wonderment
 What might the end of the Bishop be ?
 For with them the Prelate did Northward go,
 His end I know not, and none may know.—

The King had thought for that People peace ;
The Country ravaged, he spared their place :
Had bidden before it the sword to cease.
Wherefore the sudden change of grace ?
Why, when himself had bidden spare,
Did he work such a terrible vengeance there ?

Hear !—Passing that morn in peace to view
From afar the place he had lately left,
And the house that held the well-loved two
For whose kindness sake his will had reft
The City from rapine, and sack, and woe,
His eye caught a horror down below.

Yea, down on the still where the lilies fair
And the reeds were a place for the wild-fowls' nests,
Wrapt in her piteous glory, her hair,
A deep cross gashed between her breasts,
The public mark cut there in scorn
By her ravisher, dead he found her.—Borne

As a Princess, wrapt in the King's own cloak,
His Nobles bore her along to the pile ;
He saw the calm Heavens grow dark with smoke
Till it lay like a pall o'er river and isle,
And then, with a heart that had banished pity,
He had set his face for the death-doomed City.

No one, to look at that quiet Town,
Would ever imagine such things had been,
With its two tall towers, like warders brown,
Its bee-busy lime trees and ditches green ;
But who, on the face of a man, can know
The secrets hid in his heart below.

SHORTLY BEFORE.



No, he never took my fancy ; not the kind of man we wanted.—

Bold I grant you, Who denies it ! I have heard his courage vaunted

Over all our deeds of daring, such as they be, true and steadfast ;

Ours were for the sake of Freedom, his but to himself were wed fast.

Wherefore, when occasion offered, we were left ; and he, our brother,

Or at least the man we thought so, lost his legiance for another.

Left his honour with us surely, till that time the soul of honour

We had thought him, till he lost it, lost it when he looked upon her.—

Yet there always was a something half untrusted, none could gainsay,

Tho we could not give it language or our faint suspicions plain say.

She was sent, no doubt, to win him ; gold and woman wisdom, beauty,
 All were hers, and well were wielded, and the end was broken duty.
 The result is that you see me, lying lonely, gived and fettered,
 So my comrades in the next cells, and—my Friend's position bettered.—
 Yes, 'tis well to lie on cushions, if you can, and not the bare ground.
 He's exchanged his stony pillow for his pastures and his fair ground
 Fit for tillage ; he deserves it.—Yes, perhaps he's saved three classes,
 But what of the meaner millions and the men that make the masses !
 Cattle driven, whoever goad them, and they roar but bear the goading ;
 If the goad be used discreetly, skilful hands see to the loading.—
 I suppose that we must suffer, we complain not, 'twas our choosing,
 In the end our Folk are gainers, tho for us the fight is losing.
 There is something works to Freedom in the Ages as they wander
 Onwards, onwards, ever onwards ; I can see it shining yonder.
 But for us to be as he is, with his little sensual minute, Better fifty deaths of torture, tho the pangs of Hell were in it !—

Better, yes, in some cold stillness where no Sun or Star-
beam settles,
Where no flower of fairer fancy, nothing gay with golden
petals
Sheds its sweetness, where the mosses cover all its damps
and dreary
Swamps and stagnants, and, its dead eyes graying down
upon you eerie,
Glares the lichen from the green stones, we were bound
thro years to blacken,
Than that one of us, unfaithful, should give in, go back,
or slacken
From his purpose ! We will work it ! They may kill us,
they may scatter
All our ashes to the four winds ! Man is powerless over
matter
To destroy it ; so our good cause will survive and work
its mission
Till the nations kneel in worship and the world be its
fruition !

WOMANHOOD.



THERE'S something very strong and good
 In pure and perfect Womanhood,
 That sways as Saints alone can sway,
 And is more felt than understood.

 No faintest cloud obscures her day,
 No dark diverts her diamond ray,
 And when she moves, or sits, or stands,
 Sweet thoughts, like children, round her play.

 We feel the blessing of her hands,
 And carry it to distant Lands,
 To ward the evils off that pass
 With present voice that still commands.—

 Tho ever greener grows the grass,
 Flowers glow with greater depth and mass
 When perfect Woman tends them here,
 Man's heart is often dull and crass,

 And, with an Earth-attuned ear,
 He hears the notes ascending clear
 That mock from a deceiving Lilith ;
 As one who sees the Mirage near,

 And all his store of water spilleth,
 To find, too late, that nothing filleth
 The heart that only once can give
 What ne'er returns to him who willeth !

UNDINA.



O COULD I love her less, who should have loved
 Myself for that whole love I bore her ; when
 I found no answer in her perfect face
 To that great hunger which is in us men,
 Planted of God,—who else—tho all the place
 Grew dark, but for the light that round her moved,

I could not help but love her still ! I thought
 Some future day would win the boon denied
 By the sad Present : set myself to serve,
 Haply to wait each action : if she sighed
 To sigh back softly, till from nerve to nerve
 A meaning passed and all my longing taught.

Such faultless marble never could be Maid
 Of mortal feeling ; all about her room
 The Fairies seemed to whisper and to stray,
 And all the air was laden with perfume,
 That seemed to blow from roses far away,
 Winged from some heavy-scented sunny glade.

Across the latticed window wandering sprays
Drooped from the honeysuckle, left the wall
To look in thro the diamond panes and peep,
Nodding as tho they started at the call
Of some stray peewit whimpering by the sheep,
That looked up for a while and ceased to graze.

You saw the blue beyond the Hills, more near
The bluer lake that lay before the Hills,
Crisped by the breeze at times beneath the shine
Of smiling Summer, and the silver rills
That down the rocks made for the waterline
And filled with distant song the charmèd ear.

A stream of sunlight fell upon her hair,
That, glorious and gold, shone like a Saint's,
And made a mellow mist about her face ;
Like a fair Angel some old Master paints
Leaning upon his hand, and on this place
Casting a full regard : so leaned she there

And looked out of the window, deep her eye
Of sapphire inexpressible. Then she turned,
And held me with her earnest countenance,
But, while the thought to speak within me burned,
Such Elfin light broke from her, at the glance
No lake in Summer stiller stood than I.—

* * * *

She looked across the River, and the eve
Brought all its sweetness from the East, the South
Played o'er the waters, ceased, nor moved one reed.
And round about the corners of her mouth
Thought followed thought with ever-shifting speed,—
She looked too pure and lovely to deceive.

But all the beauty died away : alone
We stood there in the darkening, and in vain
I strove to speak my passion ; words denied
Me utterance, still I strove to speak again,
When straight she turned and with a look replied ;—
And the warm blood within me chilled to stone.

* * * *

The perilous crag gave as I reached the nest.—
A gasp,—a struggle,—then the Cliff passed brown,—
The air rushed past me,—and no more I knew.—
I woke, the stars were looking gently down,
Bright glowing on my face a bluer two,
And my bruised head was leaning on her breast.

A little cry, half pleasure, half dismay.—
Strange that a whole spent life of service past
Could not win what this small attempt to please
Had won for ever ; round me she had cast
Her arms, and, half supporting on her knees,
She held me fast who never wished to stray.

Her face had changed ; the fairy look had fled ;
 She was all mortal now and passionate ;
 Her womanhood and heart had slain the old ;
 Her bosom heaved and fluttered for her mate,
 And her arms trembled round about him rolled,
 For all the hateful coldness now was dead.

Then on my lips her lips were laid ; we rose
 And wandered home : she shuddered as at a grave
 And turned aside to pass the glassy mere,
 And the dank marsh where the long tassels wave
 From stalks and reedy tangles old and sere
 Thro whose grey ribs the west wind wailing goes.

At last the lights leaped up and sparkled out
 From porch and pointed casement, and fell o'er
 The face of her that used to look so cold,
 Filling it with a light unknown before
 Of warmest beauty set in ruddy gold.
 —How all the Stars were dancing round about.—

* * * *

No more she longed to gaze upon the Lake ;
 No more her Lady Mother seemed to see
 Far off enthroned with stern eyes that reproved ;
 She lived not for herself, but lived for me,
 Aye fond and tender as when first she loved,
 Nor e'er had thought her Lover to forsake.

* * * *

Ah, bitter, bitter to have known and lost !—
My Beautiful ! My Dove ! My Undefined !
O eyes that look down tenderly at night,
As tho thro swimming tears you looked and smiled !—
O darkness on this hateful world, the light
Has all gone out !—Life bound in iron frost !—

O open arms stretched out to call me hence,
Do you not speak of Summer far away
Where flowers can never sicken neath the breath
Of hate and envy, as mine did that day,
When thro the waters rose the sign of Death
To gloom the world and call my lily thence !

Hast thou departed, hast thou made thy home,
Thou and that other Being with thee ! O wife,
Who soon will part us from each other more !—
Long weary grown of Sun, and Seas, and life,
And weary of the waves that break ashore,
I hear thee call me, Lo, I come, I come !

THE VALE BETWEEN.



THERE is a Valley far away
Unvisited of Night or Day,
Where, half awake and half asleep,
Are the silent streams that downwards creep
Into the lake which lies below
But never knows an overflow.—
The Mountains rise majestically,
About that weird and mystic valley.
A mist goes up between and fills
The creeper cups, and wanders thro
Dim woods that die deliciously
Into the purple of the Hills
That widen on the view.—
The languid airs seem half asleep,
And scarce can turn above the trees,
Or move the heavy-lidded flowers
That ever seem to bend and weep,
Distilling dews, distilling tears,
And fragrances thro all the years
That make ere night their twilight hours,
That, hand in hand, a sober band,
Lead darkness o'er the silver leas.

A costly chain of moments sweet
Of sweeter South, where never meet
The Pansy and the Violet
Of Night and Morning : here are set
Those dreamy roses dipped in dew
Which spend their odours on us when
Day dies, but Dark cannot renew
Her sway upon the sense of men,
Until that time that comes between
Be over past ; the twilight seen,
And felt, as often very clear
Silence we both can feel and hear.—

It is a lonely valley this
Betwixt the Mountains Day and Night
I think a time of sweeter bliss
Than any other, tho, I wis,
Both Dawn and Dark have their delight.
I've often watched it o'er the Sea
Come stealing gently up to me,
And purple all the rocks, and fill
The crannies of that grey-coned hill,
And every wind would turn and kiss
Its following fellows, till their bliss
Wearied them into sleep, and all
You heard was that one waterfall.—
The very stars seemed half afraid
To twinkle while the great world prayed ;
And Night drew back to wait the while
And laid her finger on her lips,
And all the Earth would catch a smile
From the mild Sun, to his eclipse

Now passing swift ; yet seemed to dwell
An instant still to say farewell.—

It is a Valley of old friends ;
And friendship on the Earth, that spends
Itself at random, finds out here
A welcome from all past things dear.

Dim Vale, dim twilight Vale of love,
Where from the glooming firs the dove
Breaks out in low melodious coo,
That startles first and then goes thro
The Soul, as sea-waves go and bring
To memory some forgotten thing
Of dear delight, of diamond days,
That dimple round the lips and fill
The sweet eyes of the Past, and raise
Those downcast lids whence looks are still
The sweetest language ! O fulfil
Thyself and give them speech, and lift
My heart once more into that time
Beyond the clouds that rise and drift
And dull the days of present being,
Into the morning of my prime
When I passed onwards, laughing, seeing,
And speaking, as with friends one sees,
To all the thousand Presences
That now may only rise and greet
Me in that Valley far away,
Between the Night and close of Day,
With memories low and sweet !—

Ah, knowledge opens every hour
Upon us like a poisonous flower,

But yet with honey at its core
That formed was ere the petals burst
In open fulness ; and the first,
Tho clouded as the days go o'er
With gaudy present blooms and leaves,
Is kindly cherished, kept, and nursed,
And aye, perchance, some sweet receives
When, all the leafage over past,
Time leaves but sweetness at the last,
And gives, if nothing more, forsooth,
The honeyed memories of youth !

Aye, 'tis the gloaming hour of life
Makes Age a Lover once again,
Makes once again a girl the Wife
With knowledge only of the Good,
Unconscious yet of years or pain
In the glory of her Maidenhood !—

O Valley twixt the Day and Night,
In whom is nothing but delight,
Guide well our steps, that we may be,
From many a clime, and many a toil,
And all this wide world's strife and moil,
At Eve laid peacefully in thee !

AWAY WEST.



No canes are there in tangled Brake,—
The Red-pines stand around the Lake,
Steady and solemn, with lifted hands,
The Warders of those unknown Lands
In disordered order rows on rows,
While from the sinking Sunset take
The keen clear hill-tops with their snows
A thousand rose and crimson bands.—
Light dies away and deeper glows,
And deeper glows, and dies away
Into the dim departing day
Whose King a moment lingering stands
To say farewell before he goes,
Flinging a kiss where the waters meet
Without a ripple at our feet.—

Now from his quaint bemuddled house
The “old man” Beaver and his Spouse,
And all his kittens, and kith, and kin,
Turn out to play ; and the Wolverin
In the thick grass close to where we lie
Spins like a top in his silver skin,
Gleaming, and showing, and slipping fast

Away thro the gloom, as a ghost goes past,
Where the branches crack, and a Wapiti
Comes out to drink at the edge of the mere,
With the Moose, and the Elk, and the antlered Deer.—
And a Bighorn cutting the line of the sky,
Tho the night grows dark, shows darker and clear,
Far overhead where the stars draw near
And watch like kites for the day to die.

O what a screech as the Puma's call
Is heard above the sough of the fall,
With its villainous, piercing, shuddering howl,
And you sudden start as the silent Owl
Almost touches you passing by!—

Nature is wealthy out here indeed,
For all her snows on the hill-tops cold ;—
In Eastern lands she is growing old,
Is a Queenly Beauty of ripening year ;
But she is a wonderful Maiden here,
Bountiful, beautiful, rich to feed
Her thousand children : by rush and reed
Where the Teal were diving and feeding late,
Or, far away by that glorious Gate
More Eastward still, where the arrowy Geese
Flew seeking a home and a Summer at peace
From the face of a Winter of frozen state.—

The hand on the Rifle tightens, we rise
And see thro the darkness gleaming afar
The light of the camp-fire, as cheering a Star
As ever was seen of a wanderer's eyes.
But yet there's a Valley between ; we turn
And into the darkness we plunge, and go

Steadily into the depths below
Following down the course of the burn,
With trust in the darkness those only know
Who have lived in God's wonderful woods and wilds
Since the years that they owned were no more than a
child's,
And have instinct to guide, none can teach and none
learn,
But that grew as the forest trees grow.

LONDON.—FOUR PHOTOS.



Go search the wide World up and down,
The dreariest Desert to my mind,—
And I've seen many, red and brown,—
The hardest, cruellest, you will find,
Is pitiless midnight London Town.
When every rail and parapet
And flagstone shining in the wet
Glares on you, just as if to say,
“What want you here? Away! away!”—
When round the corners smokes the rain
And ceases for a while again,
And grimy fog and heavy damps
Lie low, and all the red-eyed lamps
Stretch on and on and twist and meet
Like fiery serpents down the street.

Or take it in its Summer dust,
In those long evenings when the Squares
Are panting for the Country, just
As pant for cooling midnight airs
The hot Plains neath their saline crust.
When, creaking onward up the main
Great thoroughfare, the fruit-carts strain,
And white shirt-fronts, some feast to grace,
Appear so poor and out of place
With that blue sky above them all,
O'er poor man's garret, rich man's hall.
And when you leave the stuccoed Rows
Of opulence, that grows and grows,
For some Streets by our River's brink,
You see some sights to make you think.

Take Winter now: the lamps are lit
And leap up strangely from the snow.—
Ah, how the People pass and flit
Like ghosts that know not where they go !
Nor heed what wretches crouch and sit
Beside the feet of those that pass ;—
And all that wealth behind a glass ;—
And should they die in Square or Strand,
There's not a soul would stir a hand.
And cheek by jowl with rotten vice
Is seen her latest sacrifice ;
And high-born Beauty rolls along,
And mayhap scornful at the throng,
Where light Electric shows each cheat
And floods with day the roaring Street.

But London's sweet in early Spring,
Or, if not sweet, not wholly vile ;
For I have heard the small birds sing,
And Almond blossoms fill with smile
Of waking life the great grim King
Whose iron reign was on our Parks,
And Children's voice, more sweet than Lark's,
Make happy all the budding boughs,
At least away from bricks and house.—
And everyone that wandered there
Breathed promised Summer in the air ;
Till Thrush and Lark in area-cage
In fancy made Spring's pilgrimage,
And somehow felt the eyes of Love
Were watching all things from above.

THE MYSTERY OF MARGARET.



THE Ladie walked by the river side
Till the evening ran a-sea with the tide,
And the waters narrowed that late were wide,

Save where, between its bank's black frown,
The silver streamlet hurried down,
Like an arrow shot from a yew bow brown.—

All things making out for the Sea,—
All things moving along, and free,—
“Why do I wait here still ?” quoth she.

She plucked from her breast a fading rose,
“I go,” she said, “where the petal goes,
Idly blown as the light wind blows.”

But the petals fell on the ground, and lay
Without a motion, as tho to say,
“Go not, Ladie, from us away !”—

She plucked a plume from her head-gear light,
And it floated away in the growing night,
Till she smiled as she said, "It sayeth me right.—

I have a Father,—he waiteth yet—
But long will he wait his Margaret :
Silent his Suns will rise and set.

I have a Brother, a Sister dear,
A Page, a Nurse, and a Kinsman near ;—
A glance for the eye, and a word for the ear.—

Little Chamber within the Tower
Meet for a Ladie to call her Bower ;—
Whose is the shadow doth crouch and cower ?—

Wind on the wall and wind on the sea,
Voices calling across to me ;
Yea, I am coming !—Avaunt—let be !—

Fool, to think to bury thy dead—
Fool, to think that the stain of red—
Fool, that answered or hearkened.—

Never a tree here ! In the South
Every flower turns from the drouth,
Drinketh the rain with open mouth,

But withers at last !—And I have drunk.—
Again the Shadow, there it slunk !—
As sand drinks water the Thing has sunk

Thro the iron rock—and I am alone!—
If Life is given, is it not our own?—
I will give it back, and so atone.—

The Moon on the Water—O gentle Moon,
Be thou a ladder to lead me soon
Away from the world in a waking swoon!

Night in the hollows of all the waves,
Find me one grave of your thousand graves.—
Nothing is black that ends and saves!—

Over the Marshes a String of Geese
Seeking what I am seeking—peace.—
Never a shade, but a delicate fleece

Twixt wind and water about the Bay,
Except where the high clouds speed away.—
Now it darkens up,—it is almost Day.

Take it an instant, and suppose
That I were to stay with you, O Rose,
What would you give me?—No man knows.—

What if I follow you, O Plume,
What will I get!—A narrow room,
Four close walls be my only doom?—

Perhaps!—And a little some eyes may weep,
Some few may a song or a story keep,
But poor tired me would at least have—sleep.

And tho, frail feather, away from sight
You idly fluttered into the night,
After the darkness there cometh—light ! ”

* * * *

The faithful Hound from the Castle high
Uttered a long and dismal cry,
As they say dogs do when their masters die.

And the sorrow that shadows the wide, wide Earth
Fell on their lordly Halls and hearth,
Till a Maid grew up for her Father's mirth.

And a Page hung sadly about the Bower,
And a Crone grieved long in the lonely Tower,
And Kindred and Friends lent grief an hour.—

But now you have come to the final goal,
And what remains, when you sum the whole ?—
Little enough—shall we say, a Soul !

LILITH.



LADY, around thy throat
 Gleameth the one gold hair ;
 And none that hath taken note
 Of the first that he looked on fair,
 The moment his boyish air
 Was moved by that mystic breeze,
 But hath felt the spell of thy presence there,
 Lilith, the first Love sees !

We sail in an open boat
 Mid breakers that rage and tear,
 And ply the oars by rote
 As over the waves we fare,
 But never a moment dare
 Gaze down at the Form by our knees,
 For her eyes that thro self and thro Soul do fare,
 Lilith, the first Love sees !

Circle of wall and moat,
 Vain as the thought to wear
 Cunning of knightly coat
 Steely and tempered rare,

Against her mute despair ;
For none there is who frees
His Soul from her spell, who hath all in care,
Lilith, the first Love sees !

L'envoi.

Maid without mate or pair,
From the Past's pale Presences,
Who is there but next his heart doth bear
Lilith, the first Love sees !

BALLADE.



O ALL that is, how little, when the heart
 Gins sick and tire and weary of what is,
 When I could spit upon the wretched part
 Flesh forces on the Spirit, for in this
 Gross world its thick red lips soil every bliss,
 With poisonous kisses, and Soul slumbereth
 Save for its dreams of hopeless bitterness :
 Ah, God, to die if Death were only Death !

Beyond the gate walls goes the woodman's cart,
 Above, in black-branched wintry nakedness,
 The trees moan to his passing, grey clouds dart
 Like moorland wild-geese overhead, I wis
 The dreary scene hath not the dreariness
 Of the sullen sea of thought which rendereth
 Its waves up 'gainst the shores with hopeless hiss ;
 Ah, God, to die if Death were only Death !

Point it out plainly : here and there thou art
 Exceeding or excelling ; here you miss
 The full attainment ! Pish ! From our first start
 What of the glory took we that was His :—

Nothing!—But ever the remembrances
Haunt us to feed the Hell that smouldereth
Within, kissed down by many a sensuous kiss;
Ah, God, to die if Death were only Death!

L'envoi.

Soul set in Flesh,—O utter hopelessness!
O evil match of pure and tainted breath!
And hast thou no release from thought amiss;—
Ah, God, to die if Death were only Death!

BALLADE : VIVIAN.



IN that old Wood, wherefrom, the Legends tell,
 Comes the vain hollow voice of him of yore,
 Who bides to all men's eyes invisible,
 But memory kept in many a story hoar
 As the mage merlin, who no art forbore,
 I wandered, tracking free the leafy ways,
 When suddenly I stayed and stood before
 Fair Vivian, Queen of all my boyish days !—

“Dost hear his voice, who made my days a hell,
 Whose might was mightier and who knew no law,
 Who looked upon my face and loved it well,
 Not for myself, but for the thing he saw ;—
 But, tho the Beast was great and grim of jaw,
 No Lamb was I :—still thro the closing maze
 I viewed but one way !”—Well thou 'scaped his maw,
 Fair Vivian, Queen of all my boyish days !

“ Ah ! but Men speak me falsely ;—take the shell
 That shows without, and not the heart's red core
 Wounded and bleeding in his arms, who fell,
 Loathing itself for the vile mask it wore

To shield its pureness."—Here she ceased : and o'er
 Her face there came a glory, whose bright rays
Gave my thought wings, as oft thou hast, to soar,
 Fair Vivian, Queen of all my boyish days !

L'envoi.

Lady, thy name hath suffered grievous sore,
 And many a tongue hath told to thy dispraise ;
But I have flung the insult back—and more,
 Fair Vivian, Queen of all my boyish days !

BALLADE OF VANITIES.



GLORIOUS gleams of a golden Day ;—
 Shadows cast by the closing Night ;—
 Voices and Visions from far away,—
 Clouds that enclose them and cut from sight.
 Ever a check on advance, despite
 The hours when the vapours a-back are rolled ;—
 And the hook of Wrong in the lip of Right.—
 Little enough when the story is told !

A shadow is thrown by every ray
 Fresh from the Sun's heart, and the white
 Of the intense arc with fiercer sway
 Deepens the blackness beyond its might ;
 And there we lie, for all our fight,
 Out in the gloom and out in the cold :—
 Prate of our progress up the height,—
 Little enough when the story is told !—

Take two Lives for example :—say
 Men have left one nought they may more requite,
 Pleasure, and honour, and pride, the pay
 Lavished and lent, till Bay and Bight

Ring with the name of the fortunate Wight
Sold in the Mart where the highest are sold ;
And the last goes less :—but of both indite,—
Little enough when the story is told !—

L'envoi.

Songs,—a few that a few recite ;—
Gold,—not much as they reckon gold ;—
Life,—that at least has leaned to the light ;—
Little enough when the story is told !

A BALLADE OF LIFE AND DEATH.



My Lady holds the lamp lit in her hands,—
 My loved lost Lady,—and no word is said
 Where, like an Angel, on the stairway stands,
 With the warm light upon her queenly head,
 She on whose lips the rising words grow dead ;
 Nor can my heart speak out its bitterness.—
 I feel my lips and cheeks have lost their red
 And rival e'en the whiteness of her dress :—
 God help us in this hour of our distress !—

Once wandering fresh in dim far fairy Lands
 Our Souls were checked, and wrapt in tombing lead,
 And buried neat those cold and clogging sands
 Whence we have never risen, and for bed
 Have still the arms of Death, and over-shed
 Some flowers, yet sweet, wherefore more merciless,
 Pale blooms from strange shores uninhabited,
 More eloquent than any words' address :—
 God help us in this hour of our distress !—

They pass away in many troops and bands,
The One remains for ever ! *They* have led
 Full many a dance before me, but the strands
 Of their bright hair melt off, and they are sped !—

The One remains ; but sad, and garlanded
With dying flowers that slip from tress and tress,—
And tears of blood wept on a loaf of bread
Cleft heartwise with a gold knife—worldliness !
God help us in this hour of our distress !

L'envoi.

Lady of Life and Death, our Souls are wed,
And deadly wrong the thought that doth transgress
Upon our union ; unimagined
Wild worlds of evil in upon us press.—
God help us in this hour of our distress !

PARTING.

—

WE were one flesh and blood, but we have grown
Away from our old selves, and only seem
Those empty things of which we once did dream,
Two vacant thrones, and gone from either throne
Their King and Queen : we have passed forth alone,
Each following down its banks a separate stream
To make a different ocean, there, I deem,
To find our shores are several and our own.—
God help us that have parted ! I would lay
My hands, if only in Spirit, on thy head,
And, ere I pass upon my further way,
Bless thee, my Darling, whom I may not wed,
Kneel for a while beside thee, and so pray
Some certain prayers for thee, who art my Dead !

THE CASTLE.

THE dark dies out, and now the long light falls
 In silver o'er the river, half asleep
 Beneath the moonbeams, silent, broad, and deep,
 Mysterious mirror of the Castle walls
 That ruined rise before :—each stone recalls
 Old escalades against the towering keep,
 Stormers repulsed, and the advance or sweep
 Of baffled knights round the inviolate Halls ;—
 Strong Saxon Axe-men,—Norman Horse,—King
 John,
 Henry, and Richard in his crooked climb
 To gain a throne ;—it later looked upon
 Stout Cromwell, Fairfax, Rupert :—but sublime
 O'er all, now stands no siege as years go on,
 Saving “the immemorial siege of Time !”

ON PICTURES BY MY FRIEND, HERBERT
SCHMALZ.

“THE DIM MYSTIC FUTURE.”

(ROYAL ACADEMY, 1880.)

IT rises dark before us, and your eyes
Have caught its meaning half ; as in the glen
The crystal pools are shadowed over, when
Dim autumn evening clouds make dull the skies,
And the long River that beneath them lies
Has lost the Sunset to the East.—Agen
A Feeling of the Future fills us, then
Swims slowly off and Night's late lamps arise.—
Ah Sweet, you face that veiled Future far
With all its unknown sorrow or delight,
But well companioned on that path you are
With one to follow, one to guide aright,
The mystic Moon behind you, and the Star
That beams above to lead you thro the night !

“SIR GALAHAD.”

(ROYAL ACADEMY, 1881.)

It is no fancy that we need today
The Warrior Spirit ; tho not kingly blade,
But knighthood of more noble accolade,
High purpose for the right, must dub and lay
The cleansing chrism on us : tho we slay
No evil giants, save no trembling maid,
Because the years have all grown grey and staid,
Believe me, there are higher debts to pay
In this back-boneless state of modern things
Where none are over-good or over-bad ;
And whether from oaten-reed piped, or from strings
Struck out, their songs come always sour or sad,
To raise us higher, who have lost our wings,
The world has need of each “Sir Galahad.”

“VOICES.”

(ROYAL ACADEMY, 1882.)

Voices there are of mountain, storm, and sea,
And from the streams that laugh about our feet,
And from the breath of fragrant meadow-sweet,
And all the gentle blooms of holm and lea ;
And those azaleas once had spoke to thee
The joy of life, nor told its passing fleet
Beyond that Unseen Holy no lives meet :—
Wherefore, tho often rises up on me
The tender past and full of sounds that shake
The chords of some old music, till rejoices
The happy heart mid corn or poppied brake,
I see you stand sad-eyed, for never choices
Gives iron Fate of good or ill, and take
Sad thought of those who now are only “Voices!”—

ROUND THE POLE.

HIDING the sickly Moon the wrack
 Of stormy cloud and rising mist
 Filled the dim space beyond the pack
 Of ice with quivering amethyst,
 And, shot with lightnings from the sky,
 The pale Aurora stooped and kissed
 The dead men that lay by.—

* * * *
 The Storm passed on—behind the Storm
 A Shape that stooped and stayed
 Its course awhile, an awful Form
 That its long fingers laid
 Upon each frozen Skeleton,
 Then mocking laughed, as half afraid,
 And with its snows passed on.

* * * *
 O iron North, unconquered still,
 The day is yet to rise
 When England's more unconquered will
 Shall look you in the eyes
 And take you by your frozen throat,
 And from your heart of ice
 Wring vengeance for that shattered boat !

UNDERTONES.

I.

IN some strange corner of ourselves
 Stands a still harp with silent string,
 Till touched by those forgotten Elves
 That Memory has at call to bring
 And keep the cords revibrating
 To some old strain she used to sing.

II.

And when I heard the wild bird's note
 My heart has answered, like a chord
 That trembles from some organ's throat
 Against the quivering sounding-board,
 That shakes with the same air waves broad
 As those on which the music soared.

III.

So lights, and leaves, and fields, and flowers,
 Keep each their several influence,
 And, after all the passing hours,
 Recall at will that subtle sense
 That some deem passed for ever hence,
 No more of present consequence.

IV.

Ah, we are stored beyond the thought
 Of any man with dim Unknowns ;
 And little need it should be taught
 How we are ruled by undertones,
 The shape two clouds may take,—or cones,
 The scattered order of the stones !

V.

No doubt 'tis floods that scar, and tear,
 But two sticks whirling in the flood
 Will catch our whole thought ; centre there,
 By laws that none have understood,
 Some subtle sympathy, and food
 For thought that ever climbs to good.

VI.

The Past has left such clear impress,
 Has made so deep its signet burn
 Upon our brain, that all the dress
 Of this world's flesh, with sudden spurn
 Casts off what mightier seems, to turn
 To that which nothing can unlearn.

VII.

'Tis a wide subject,—permanence—
 A final permanence, I see,
 Resultant as the perfect tense
 The under world speaks ; deathlessly
 A final character must be
 The part of all, who yet are free.

VIII.

Repeated wrong impairs the Soul,
Whose Soul is dulled repeated acts
To evil part: e'en bird songs roll,
Half automatic, cataracts
Against the brain.—What prior pacts
Were made, who knows? But these are facts!

IX.

It needs not that the bow be drawn
Across our strings to raise replies:—
In some far section of the dawn
Was acted out, what now doth rise
And bound across the gulf that lies
Between, claims kin and makes surmise.

X.

I cannot master it, or make
The meaning clear I would express.—
But there is something bids one shake
Before the Dim:—We can but guess
The infinite thoughts our lives compress
Behind a note, or poppy's dress!

FROM THE SHORE.

YOUR song is softer than the breeze,
And mellow-throated like the seas
You send your voice across the shore ;—
Neath where the Geese and Ganets soar
In the warm waves you poise and float,
And sing those verses o'er and o'er,
That all along these Northern strands
Are heard, heard too in many lands,
When memory grows a charmed boat
To bear us back o'er Summer waters.—
O fairest of all Fancy's daughters,
With bosom bared, and outstretched hands,
And long hair lifted by each swell,—
Each glassy swell that makes across,
With the slow sweep of an Albatross,
To fill the Bay, and loving dwell
Round every coral, cove, and shell,
With comfort for the low tide's loss !

I cannot grasp and give you name,
O sad voice sighing by the sea,
Whose ceaseless woe has never end :—
And yet not sad, for oft to me
It hath been sweeter than a friend ;
Lifting my thought, till with it came
A hope, a lighter heart, a flame,—
A ruddy flame of happiness
That filled my cheeks with warmer red,
And showed me straight the Form Distress
Before me, smitten thro, and dead !

Ah, many a day when lights lay low,
And mixed and molten with the seas
The sunlight gold was tangled up,
And laughed around each laughing cup
Scooped in the waves behind the breeze,
Your voice across the blue would go,
And all the Tangles in the sea
Shook wild and clapped their hands for glee,
And every bubble round the prore
That rose in foam and flew ashore,
Seemed laughing out on me !

And when low moons were on the deep
And waves behind the taffrail slipped,
And curled and flamed with fairy light,
And rose, and sank again, and dipped,

A voice has broken on my sleep
And called me to the vessel's side.—
Thy dim white arms and shape, I spied ;
And strange thoughts to my heart did creep,
As creeping clouds across the sky
Creep off, and show, or sight defy,
And leave you sad and wonder-eyed !

O half-heard Voice,—O Unknown Friend,—
O potent power of boyish years,—
Return, if for an hour agen,
As the returning morning cheers
With floods of glory overlaid
The old Earth weary, lost, and strayed,
Beyond the pathway it should wend !
For short the journey I have made,
And I am hardly yet of men ;
So near the Past, so far the End ;—
Grow once more as thou wast to me,
Before the Present grew to be
So dark and dull, throughout my night
A wealth, a wonder, a delight,
O unseen Presence, Memory !

FINIS.

GUSTAVE DORÉ.

BORN 1833—DIED 188



A MASTER gone today, A Titan Soul!—

The mightiest given since Michael Angelo,
 In depth, and height, and force, and power, and flow,
 Tho, mayhap, winging onward to its goal,
 And sweeping round so far from pole to pole,

Imagination oftentimes seemed to grow
 Too vast for its expression, and our slow
 Earth workers carped who could not grasp the whole.—

He grandly moved above the daily strut

Of little men; and, now that all is said,
 He childlike lies, with gentle eyelids shut,

At peace and well: for those sad two years sped*
 His Light of Life was quenched, and left him but
 A great Heart breaking for a dear Heart dead.—

* Doré never recovered from the shock caused by the loss of his mother, who died some two years since, and to whom he was most tenderly and devotedly attached.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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